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LDF Statement on Revocation of Trump Administration’s Anti-Diversity Executive Order

Today, President Biden announced the revocation of the Trump administration’s “Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping,” (“EO 13950”) issued in September 2020. The now-revoked order took aim at federal agencies, grant programs, and contractors – forbidding them from engaging in programs and trainings that promote diversity and inclusion, and conditioning federal funding on adherence to a prescribed, ahistorical belief system. The Executive Order also threatened penalties against a supervisor or employee who authorizes or approves such trainings and purported to define and prohibit the “promotion” of, or belief in, “divisive concepts.” The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) worked with partners to immediately issue a statement signed by over 120 organizations demonstrating the wide-spanning opposition to the Executive Order.

In October 2020, LDF filed a federal lawsuit against former President Trump and various cabinet heads on behalf of the National Urban League and the National Fair Housing Alliance to challenge the order on the grounds that it violated the guarantees of Free Speech, Equal Protection, and Due Process – fundamental rights secured in the United States Constitution. The complaint was amended in January 2021 to add the American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity as a plaintiff, as well as several additional federal agency defendants. EO 13950, also known as the “Trump Truth Ban” and “Equity Gag Order,” was also roundly criticized by numerous organizations and institutions across the country and gave rise to the #TruthBeTold campaign, a joint initiative of the African American Policy Forum and LDF.

In response to today’s revocation, Janai Nelson, LDF’s Associate Director-Counsel, released the following statement:

“The Trump administration’s Executive Order was a sweeping attempt at historical revision and unprecedented censorship in the workplace. It was a ban on free speech, freedom of expression, and critical thinking, and an attempt to erase the lived experiences of people of color, women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. In the few months of its existence, it negatively impacted the lives and livelihoods of countless Americans and advanced the dangerous cause of white supremacy and disinformation.

“We applaud the Biden-Harris administration’s swift revocation of this divisive and harmful Executive Order on its first day in office and are encouraged by its commitment to embedding equity in all aspects of federal government and removing barriers to equal opportunity for all communities. There is much work ahead to undo the years of damage done by the previous administration to the institutions of our democracy, the everyday lives of Americans, and the very fabric of our nation. LDF will remain vigilant in our efforts to ensure racial justice and equity for Black communities across the nation and we look forward to working with the Biden-Harris administration to make this a reality.”

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).