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## **LDF Responds to Trump Administration Proposal to Pursue Death Penalty for Drug Traffickers**

In response to the opioid crisis, the Trump Administration is proposing pursuing the death penalty for those convicted of drug trafficking. [Sherrilyn Ifill](#), President and Director-Counsel at NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), issued the following statement:

“There are perhaps no two areas in the criminal justice system that are marked by greater racial disparities than the sentencing of drug-related offenses and the imposition of the death penalty. In case after case, LDF has demonstrated the continued influence of racism in determining who is sentenced to death, including in last year’s Supreme Court win in *Buck v. Davis*. Likewise, the prosecution of and punishments for drug-related crimes are similarly rife with racial discrimination. Even Congress has recognized its own complicity in contributing to these disparities through its enactment of an irrational and disparate sentencing scheme for offenses involving crack versus powder cocaine.

“That the President would now seek to marry these two areas of extreme racial discrimination is yet more evidence that this Administration is completely out of touch with the movement of prosecutors, judges, members of Congress, and communities around the country away from fear-based practices and towards less discriminatory, evidence-based criminal justice policies.”

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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 and 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.*