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LDF Files Amicus Brief in Longstanding Employment Discrimination Case

Last week, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) filed an amicus brief in the employment discrimination case of *EEOC v. International Association of Bridge Structural and Ornamental Ironworkers Local 580, et al.* The longstanding case was first filed in 1971, alleging that Local 580 and other unions violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by failing to admit or recruit nonwhite workers into the union’s membership, and by failing to refer them to employment opportunities on the same level as their white counterparts.

LDF’s brief urges the court to conduct a thorough review before approving a recently proposed consent decree that would remove the protections for workers of color currently in place and effectively dissolve existing orders enjoining the unions from engaging in discriminatory practices.

“Courts have historically played a crucial role in addressing discrimination in the labor movement through the use of consent decrees, an important tool that may be used to force unions and other institutions to fully comply with Title VII,” said LDF Assistant Counsel Jason Bailey. “We respectfully urge the court to take great care and use its authority to conduct a meaningful review of the proposed consent decree prior to its approval, including holding a hearing to hear from Black and Latinx members who may be adversely affected by the decree.”

LDF’s brief explains that Black workers were historically excluded from many unions and emphasizes that consent decrees, such as the ones at issue in this case, were often used by courts to integrate the labor movement. The brief asks the court to conduct a searching review of the proposed consent decree given the importance of Title VII in eliminating employment discrimination and because courts have taken a similar approach in other Title VII cases.

Finally, LDF urges the court to conduct a hearing or solicit comments from Local 580’s Black and Latinx members, who can speak to the court about any concerns they may have regarding persisting discrimination in the unions.

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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](#).