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## **LDF Condemns Passage of Texas Senate Bills 12 and 37**

On June 20, 2025, Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed into law Senate Bills 12 and 37 (SB 12 and SB 37), which are two bills that significantly risk censorship and restrictions of accurate and inclusive programs and curriculum in K-12 and higher education. SB 12 bans diversity, equity, and inclusion in K-12 schools, and SB37 constrains academic freedom in public colleges and universities. The [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#) strongly opposed passage of SB 12 and SB 37, citing grave concerns about the bills' disproportionate harm to Black students and educators in the state.

"The Governor's decision to sign into law Senate Bills 12 and 37 is yet another attack on public education in Texas and a dangerous departure from the principles of equality and academic freedom that are necessary to ensure equal access to quality education for all Texas students," said **Jin Hee Lee, LDF Director of Strategic Initiatives**. "For decades, programs that advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, along with academic freedom in colleges and universities, have been fundamental in championing equal opportunity so all students, but especially those most marginalized, can thrive in quality, inclusive, and equitable learning environments. SB 12 and SB 37 pose a significant threat to the significant progress that has already been made, risking a regression that will disproportionately harm the safety, success, and well-being of Black students and educators throughout the state. We denounce these restrictive measures and will closely monitor their impact."

**Senate Bill 12** is an omnibus bill that, among other things, prohibits "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" in Texas' public K-12 schools. The bill dangerously mischaracterizes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices as discriminatory and will erect barriers for Texas' public schools to ensure equal opportunity for Black students and other historically marginalized students in compliance with federal civil rights laws.

**Senate Bill 37** is an omnibus bill that, among other things, transfers curriculum authority from faculty to politically-appointed governing boards, converts elected faculty senate positions into appointed positions, and strips faculty of their due process rights during the disciplinary process. SB 37 risks disproportionately harming Black students and professors and potentially restricting the teaching of Black history, Black culture, and issues of systemic inequalities.

"While these bills vary in approach, they both stifle access and opportunity for Black students and educators, who already face disparate barriers and are underrepresented within Texas classrooms," said **Allen Liu, Policy Counsel at LDF**. "SB 12 and SB 37 run afoul of the key tenets that are necessary for a strong public education system in which all Texans can learn and succeed. Despite these challenges, we will continue to fight for Black students in Texas to access the equal educational opportunities they deserve."

On June 4, 2025, LDF [sent a letter](#) urging Texas Governor Abbott to veto SB 12 and SB 37. In the letter, Lee cited the various shortfalls and implications of the bills for Black communities in the state.

“LDF respectfully urges you to veto Senate Bills 12 and 37,” the letter [reads in part](#). “The prohibition of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives is unnecessary and will cause disproportionate harm to people of color, including Black students and faculty. Moreover, transferring curriculum authority from expert faculty to political appointees jeopardizes important scholarship that may be politically disfavored, thus undermining the quality and integrity of Texas’ higher education.”

LDF has been deeply involved in advocacy at the state and federal levels to ensure equal opportunity in education, including in Texas. As America’s first and foremost civil rights law firm, the organization spearheaded the litigation which led to the Supreme Court’s seminal ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

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*Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. 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 Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that 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.*