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Leading Civil Rights Organizations Urge Congress to Reject Bill Giving Government Broad Powers to Revoke Nonprofits' Tax-Exempt Status

Today, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) — along with the NAACP, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, National Action Network, National Urban League, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, and National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) — sent a letter to top lawmakers in Congress urging them to oppose H.R. 9495 — legislation that would give the secretary of the Department of the Treasury broad power to revoke the tax-exempt status of nonprofit organizations. The letter argues that, if passed, the bill could be weaponized to target racial justice organizations and protestors, which have long been targets of biased criminal investigations.

LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson issued the following statement:

“H.R. 9495 is a dangerous piece of legislation that would give the federal government unprecedented and extraordinary authority to target, harass, and intimidate nonprofit groups with which it disagrees. The bill would have a devastating effect on racial justice organizations and civil rights groups. No administration should have the power to unilaterally shut down nonprofit organizations, thereby stifling dissent, without oversight or legitimate checks, and yet that’s exactly what this bill seeks to allow.”

The full text of the letter can be found [here](#).

The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the bill tomorrow, November 21.

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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.