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Media Contacts:

LDF, media@naacpldf.org

LDF Calls for President-Elect Trump to Withdraw Hegseth Defense Secretary Nomination

The Legal Defense Fund today called for the withdrawal of Defense Secretary nominee Peter Hegseth from consideration.

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

“The Secretary of Defense oversees a Department of Defense that employs over 2.8 million personnel. To successfully lead this agency charged with ‘provid[ing] the military forces needed to deter war and ensure our nation’s security’ requires mutual respect between the Secretary and Department personnel, as well as the respect of the global community for the Department’s leadership. Peter Hegseth possesses neither of these qualities and has, instead, positioned himself as a divisive and disruptive force who poses a national security threat.”

“By claiming that brave leaders of our armed forces are mere ‘woke’ generals, Mr. Hegseth unfairly disparages the hard work and achievements that placed them in positions of military leadership and threatens to weaken the standing of our armed forces worldwide. Likewise, Mr. Hegseth’s unequivocal opposition to women in combat disregards the substantial contributions that women have made at all levels of our military, including combat operations. This lack of respect for those who have put their lives on the line for and devoted their careers in service of the American people is patently disqualifying for the role of Defense Secretary. President-elect Trump should withdraw Mr. Hegseth’s nomination immediately and replace him with a leader whose integrity is not in question and whose regard for our armed forces is beyond reproach.”

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Legal Defense Fund (LDF) - *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.