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LDF Applauds New Government Fact Sheet on Legality of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programs

Today, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights released a [fact sheet](#) confirming that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training programs are in accordance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VI states that “no person ... shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination” due to “race, color, or national origin” by any program or initiative that receives federal funding.

According to the fact sheet, “[a]ctivities intended, in whole or in part, to further objectives such as diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion are not generally or categorically prohibited under Title VI.”

In response to the release of the fact sheet, Legal Defense Fund (LDF) President and Director-Counsel Janai S. Nelson released the following statement:

“We applaud the Administration’s decision to clearly and straightforwardly establish that diversity, equity, and inclusion training programs are in complete accordance with existing civil rights law. It reflects the current state of our nation that this fundamental aspect of civil rights law needs to be clarified.

“Currently, a vocal and unpopular minority is seeking to roll back the progress this country has made on civil rights and waging a dangerous and divisive campaign to silence, intimidate, and ostracize anyone who disagrees with that campaign. Over the past two years, dozens of states — including some of the most populous, and most diverse, in the nation — such as Florida, South Carolina, Alabama, and Texas — have introduced or passed radical legislation that can only be understood as part of a larger effort to suppress the views and voices of Black people and other people of color, as well as women, LGBTQ+ people, and other members of historically marginalized groups. No one should have their identity, their lived experiences, or their history censored or suppressed by laws that discriminate based on viewpoint or identity.

“It is essential that, in such a climate of disinformation and demagoguery, all of those who believe in a more just, more equal, and more inclusive future for this country stand together in support of trainings and other educational programming to enhance the strength of our multi-racial, pluralistic democracy.”

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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.