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**LDF PRAISES U.S. SUPREME COURT RULING THAT PRESERVES PROTECTIONS
AGAINST WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION PROVIDED BY TITLE VII OF THE
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**

(New York, NY – April 17, 2024) Today, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) lauds the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Muldrow v. St. Louis* that preserves the goal and intent of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which protects employees from discrimination in the workplace.

LDF filed an [amicus brief](#) in *Muldrow v. St. Louis* in support of Jatonya Muldrow, a sergeant with the St. Louis Police Department who alleged she was discriminated against under Title VII when her supervisor transferred her to another position because he preferred a man serve in her role. The district court ruled a discriminatory transfer that does not “*produce [] a material employment disadvantage*” is “*not an adverse employment action*” under Title VII. The Eighth Circuit affirmed the district court’s ruling, stating discriminatory job transfers and denials of requested transfers are lawful under Title VII when they do not impose “*materially significant disadvantages*” on employees, such as a demotion in title or reduction in pay. As LDF explained in its *amicus* brief, this significant disadvantage requirement is harmful to employees and cannot be applied fairly. Such a rule also fails to recognize the significant harm caused by non-economic injuries in the workplace.

The Supreme Court overturned the Eighth Circuit’s decision, stating that “[a]lthough an employee must show some harm from a forced transfer to prevail in a Title VII suit, she need not show that the injury satisfies a significance test. Title VII’s text nowhere establishes that high bar.”

“In practice, the ‘materially significant disadvantage’ standard supported by the Eighth Circuit would have sanctioned workplace discrimination and pulled at the very foundation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act,” said Pilar Whitaker, Special Economic Justice Counsel, LDF. “Today, the Supreme Court made it clear workplace rules must honor employees’ ability and dignity.”

The Supreme Court’s decision in *Muldrow* is an important victory for workers across the nation, ensuring that Title VII’s protections against racial discrimination are fairly applied. Contrary to what some have claimed, this decision does not directly implicate programs that create diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). Unlike the discriminatory transfer at issue in *Muldrow*, DEIA programs generally do not rely on race to determine the terms and conditions of employment.

“Programs that create diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are fundamental to fulfilling employers’ Title VII obligations to create workplaces that are free from discrimination and in which everyone feels included and valued,” said Amalea Smirniotopoulos, Senior Policy Counsel and Co-Manager of the Equal Protection Initiative, LDF. “Today’s decision by the Supreme Court reinforces those obligations. As our country becomes more diverse in the coming decades, investing in programs that break down barriers to opportunity is essential to our multi-racial democracy. We cannot afford to leave talent on the table.”

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About the Legal Defense Fund: Founded in 1940, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. 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.