



Urban League of  
Greater Atlanta



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## In Critical Victory for Georgia Students, Civil Rights Organizations and Diverse Advocacy Community Lead Defeat of Georgia Senate Bill 120

[Atlanta, Georgia] – In a critical victory for Georgia students, a group of civil rights organizations expressed gratitude in the defeat of [SB120](#) in the Georgia Senate on Thursday. The bill sought to eliminate all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies and programs from Georgia’s K-12 schools and higher education institutions. Georgia students will be able to continue learning in inclusive environments that work to fairly and adequately prepare them for their futures.

The defeat followed widespread public opposition to the bill, including [a press conference](#) and [a letter sent by a group of civil rights organizations](#) to Georgia lawmakers citing the devastating consequences that SB120 would have had on Georgia’s students, staff, and teachers. In the [letter](#), the organizations asserted that anti-diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility legislation like SB120 posed a significant threat to Georgia’s student population and urged state lawmakers to reaffirm policies that prevent and address unfair barriers to access and opportunity in education.

The civil rights organizations include the [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#), [ACLU of Georgia](#), [Georgia Educators for Equity & Justice \(GAEEJ\)](#), the [Urban League of Greater Atlanta](#), the [Georgia Youth Justice Coalition](#), the [Georgia Coalition for the Peoples’ Agenda](#), and [IDRA](#).

In response to the news, the organizations issued the following statement:

“We, the undersigned organizations, stand united in expressing our collective relief following the defeat of Senate Bill 120 in the Georgia Legislature. This bill posed a significant threat to Georgia’s students, staff, and faculty, and, if enacted, would have substantially undermined their

right to access a high-quality, fair, and inclusive education system. We thank the Georgia Senate for rejecting SB 120 in the best interests of our state.

“While we take this moment to express our gratitude, we remain committed in our efforts to protect programs and policies that foster diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, and advance fair, high-quality, and inclusive education for all students.

“Our schools should be places where all students can succeed, thrive, and feel a sense of belonging. The defeat of this bill marks a crucial moment in our ongoing efforts to protect this fundamental truth. We are united in our belief that Georgia is destined to create an education system that works for all students—not that repeats the mistakes of the past.

“We are immensely thankful for the steadfast determination and courage of countless students, including Georgia Tech students, who met this moment with unwavering resolve to advocate against SB120. For several days, students showed up at the Capitol, speaking directly to lawmakers about the critical importance of these programs and policies in ensuring the success, well-being, and bright futures of every student. Their message was clear: united, our voices can and must be heard. Their adamant efforts prove that we are not powerless—and we can win.

“We cannot and will not allow anti-diversity, equity and inclusion attacks like SB120 to stand. SB120 threatened to withhold billions in funding for schools without due process or guardrails to prevent discriminatory implementation. This bill had the potential to create lasting damage for many communities, and while its defeat is a relief, it does not mean our campuses are as diverse, equitable, or inclusive as they should be.

“What we can celebrate today is that we stood beside students, parents, and educators to prevent a law that could have exacerbated existing disparities through the elimination of programs and services essential to supporting a diverse group of students, including Black students, LGBTQ+ students, and students with disabilities. We are grateful that our state can continue the work to provide all students access to high-quality, safe and inclusive learning environments.

“This critical outcome marks a significant victory for Georgia’s students, staff, and faculty—including more than 1.7 million K-12 students, and hundreds of thousands of college students served by public educational institutions in our state. Programs and policies that aim to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are foundational to building a fair, inclusive system and are instrumental in ensuring equal opportunity for all students—regardless of their identity or background.”