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LDF Media
212-965-2200 / media@naacpldf.org

LDF and Natural Hair Discrimination Clients Issue Statement on CROWN Act's Passage in Texas

Texas Governor Greg Abbott [signed](#) the CROWN Act into law on Saturday, May 27. The new law will go into effect on September 1, 2023 and will prohibit race-based hair discrimination in Texas housing, workplaces, and schools. Texas is the 22nd state to enact a version of the law, joining Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, and several others. The CROWN Act aims to end the denial of employment, educational, and other opportunities because of natural hair texture and protective hairstyles.

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) has [long advocated](#) for the end of [race-based hair discrimination](#). Since 2020, LDF has [represented](#) clients De'Andre Arnold, Kaden Bradford, and Sandy Arnold in a lawsuit challenging Barbers Hill Independent School District's discriminatory hair policy. LDF is also a member of the CROWN Coalition, a group of 80+ community and advocacy organizations that have pushed for the passage of the CROWN Act in all 50 states.

In response to the CROWN Act's passage in Texas, LDF clients De'Andre Arnold and Kaden Bradford, and attorneys Michaele Turnage Young and Patricia Okonta issued the following statements:

LDF Client De'Andre Arnold:

"I am thrilled to learn of the passage of the CROWN Act in my home state of Texas. My natural hair is a fundamental part of my identity and culture, and when my cousin and I's access to educational opportunities was wrongly denied because of how we wear our natural hair, we faced significant challenges. I am happy that this law will bring positive change and improve the lives of countless Black people, like me, who only want to live and wear their natural hair free of discrimination."

LDF Client Kaden Bradford:

"I am excited to witness the passage of the CROWN Act here in Texas, which will protect individuals like me from hair discrimination. My locs are a part of what makes me who I am, and those of us with natural hair should not be discriminated against because of it. The CROWN Act recognizes the importance of this truth and will now prevent other people from facing the same challenges I did."

LDF Senior Counsel, Michaele Turnage Young:

“We commend Governor Abbott and the Texas Legislature for passing the CROWN Act, a crucial piece of legislation that will protect people across the state from being discriminated against based on their hair texture and culturally significant hairstyles. For too long, hair discrimination has placed an undue burden on Black people in Texas and across the country. Now, we call on Congress to pass a national CROWN Act to fully protect people in all states from race-based hair discrimination.”

LDF Assistant Counsel, Patricia Okonta:

“Today’s passage of the CROWN Act is a major step forward in protecting Texans from natural hair discrimination. Like other aspects of Black culture and identity, natural hair is too often unfairly scrutinized and penalized, especially in schools and workplaces, putting people with natural hairstyles at a stark disadvantage. This legislation will have a tremendous effect in Texas as countless individuals will be able to better access employment, housing, and educational opportunities.”

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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.*