



National
Urban League

August 8, 2023

President Joseph Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Vice President Kamala Harris
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

On behalf of the National Urban League (“NUL”) and our 92 affiliates that serve over 300 communities across 36 states and the District of Columbia, we are writing to express our strong support for your commitment to advancing civil rights and economic opportunities for Black communities as consumers, workers, and business owners, particularly as technological advancements move at an increasingly rapid pace. Research and user experiences have clearly demonstrated that artificial intelligence (“AI”) can further marginalize those who are already most at risk of being excluded from a wide range of life opportunities including, but not limited to, equitable access to employment, education, housing, healthcare, and civic engagement, as well as those most impacted by the inequities of our criminal legal system. Advancements in AI also present unique opportunities to advance equity, improve the delivery of government services, and provide economic opportunities to diverse communities as workers and business owners. As a historic civil rights organization that advocates on behalf of and provides direct services to a diverse constituency, NUL believes that an Executive Order on Artificial Intelligence must address these pressing concerns. A robust and meaningful executive order must uphold civil rights, promote diversity and inclusion, advance economic opportunities, and reduce harms through strong data privacy and security protections:

1. **Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination:** The executive order should make the *AI Bill of Rights* a binding administration policy. This blueprint outlines ways to protect all people, including historically marginalized groups, from the threats of automated systems. By prioritizing civil rights protections, we can ensure that AI technologies across the federal government do not reinforce existing inequalities and instead contribute to a more just and equitable society.

2. **Diversity and Inclusion in AI Development:** The executive order should promote the active involvement and investment of Black communities in AI research, development, and decision-making processes. As NUL has previously stated, “one of the many ways to mitigate risks in AI systems and to ensure civil rights are protected is by ensuring Black workers are included and leading at all levels throughout the research, design, development, and deployment stages. The absence of or strategic marginalization of a diverse workforce will have adverse effects on those



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we represent and will undermine the country’s leadership in this technological revolution.”¹ Diverse AI practitioners and researchers will yield more comprehensive AI solutions that accurately reflect the needs and perspectives of all communities.

3. Economic Opportunities: As stated in the National Urban League’s *Lewis Latimer Plan for Digital Equity and Inclusion*, the technology and technology-enabled ecosystems have spurred job creation across the American economy; however, the opportunities to accumulate wealth have not been distributed to Black and Latino/e workers and business owners at the same rate.² It is imperative that the economic benefits of AI are accessible to everyone. We urge the inclusion of measures that foster skill development and entrepreneurship within Black communities, which enable them to actively participate in the AI-driven economy as both workers and business owners.

4. Data Privacy and Security: The National Urban League has previously supported data privacy legislation that includes civil rights protections and data minimization standards. It is imperative that the federal government leads by example to ensure data, particularly data that impacts life opportunities, is used responsibly and ethically. The executive order should include “prohibitions and limits placed on the collection of sensitive data, as well as limiting data collection generally to what is needed to provide the product or service.”³

The National Urban League's continued dedication to promoting economic empowerment and advocating for social justice aligns with the goals of creating and implementing equitable AI policies. We are confident that the Executive Order on Artificial Intelligence will serve as a cornerstone for inclusive AI governance that allows Black communities to benefit from and contribute to this AI revolution. We look forward to continued collaboration with your administration. Please contact Yvette Badu Nimako, Interim Executive Director of the Washington Bureau at the National Urban League, at ybadu@nul.org or Alisa Valentin, Senior Director of Technology and Telecommunications Policy at the National Urban League, at avalentin@nul.org if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Marc H. Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

¹ Comments of National Urban League, *National Priorities for Artificial Intelligence*, Docket No.: OSTP-TECH-2023-0007, Filed with the Office of Science at Technology Policy, (July 7, 2023).

² *The Lewis Latimer Plan for Digital Equity and Inclusion*, National Urban League (March 30, 2021), <https://nul.org/program/lewis-latimer-plan>.

³ *Civil Rights, Tech Groups Call on Biden to Protect Public from Harms of AI*, Letter to the White House, (August 4, 2023), <https://civilrights.org/2023/08/04/civil-rights-tech-groups-call-on-biden-to-protect-public-from-harms-of-ai/>.



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Cc:

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