



**National
Urban League**

*Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.
For An Equitable Future.*

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November 20, 2024

The Honorable James Comer
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and
Accountability
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
House Committee on Oversight and
Accountability
2106 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Plot to Resegregate and Divide America

Dear Chairman Comer and Ranking Member Raskin:

I write to express the National Urban League's strong opposition to H.R. 8706, the so-called Dismantle DEI Act. For more than a century, the National Urban League has worked to diversify America's workforce and ensure opportunities for all, including those who have been systemically excluded from having a seat at the table. Through our 92 affiliates across 36 states and the District of Columbia, we serve over 300 communities with empowerment programs in housing, health, education, and workforce development, benefiting millions of individuals annually. The National Urban League's success over the past 114 years is rooted in our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), which strengthen institutions and improve outcomes for all Americans. As we continue to witness attacks on equality and opportunity — the very ideals that underpin the American Dream, the harmful and misguided legislation your committee is considering today presents a direct assault on the principles that underpin not only the National Urban League's work, but also fairness, opportunity, and progress in our society. We unequivocally reject this legislation and urge the committee to do the same.

In addition to rescinding critical executive orders and agency memoranda that aim to protect civil rights and promote inclusion, H.R. 8706 seeks to defund federal offices, programs, grants, and trainings that promote DEI. The Dismantle DEI Act is not just a rejection of DEI — shamefully, it is a rejection of our nation's founding principles and the values that make America great: diversity, opportunity, and justice for all. This legislation undermines decades of progress in ensuring fairness in hiring, education, and the broader economy. It seeks to erase the mechanisms that address historical and systemic inequities while imposing severe penalties for individuals and agencies that refuse to abandon these American principles and values.



As we strive to bolster America's competitive edge over global adversaries, attracting, training, and retaining talent from a broader, more diverse pool has never been more critical. Dismantling vital initiatives that help expand opportunity and level the playing field for those historically left behind would have far-reaching and damaging consequences, stifling creativity, innovation, and progress in our workplaces, educational institutions, and communities — urban and rural alike. Research consistently demonstrates that DEI enhances performance and boosts profitability, proving its value time and again. Yet, this ill-conceived legislation disregards clear evidence of DEI's effectiveness and its widespread support among Americans. An outright ban on DEI would be unjustifiable, harmful to the workforce, and contrary to the public sentiment.

At a time when our nation should be striving to overcome division and building unity, H.R. 8706 instead seeks to turn back the clock by permitting actions that undermine hard fought federal civil rights and non-discrimination laws. Its aim to dismantle DEI policies is nothing short of a plot to resegregate and divide America.

The National Urban League encourages the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability to resist this latest attempt at scoring political points, and instead, move forward common sense, productive measures aimed at harnessing diversity as our nation's power source for prosperity and innovation. We remain committed to advocating for policies that advance these values, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure that the promise of justice and opportunity is a reality for every American.

Sincerely,



Marc H. Morial
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Urban League