



February 12, 2025

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Thune
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader Thune, Speaker Johnson, and Leader Jeffries:

As leaders of the Demand Diversity Roundtable, a coalition of over 20 civil and human rights organizations representing more than 100 million Americans, we are united in our commitment to ensure equal opportunity for all and protect the core values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Consequently, we are deeply concerned about the recent executive actions by the Trump Administration that seek to undo decades of bipartisan support for civil and human rights. These actions undermine equal opportunity, jeopardize America's economic growth and global competitiveness, and threaten the foundational principles of our democracy.

The gravity of these efforts was underscored by President Trump's deplorable comments following the tragic plane crash in Washington D.C., where he used diversity, equity, and inclusion as a racist, sexist, ableist dog whistle to inflame division and hate further instead of focusing on the needs of victims and their families.

The Trump Administration's Executive Orders to dismantle federal programs that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to remove enforcement of protections against discrimination for millions of Americans working for contractors receiving federal funds, are deeply disturbing. These actions, combined with threats targeting hardworking and qualified American workers who have dutifully served this nation, alongside Department of Justice memos pausing civil rights cases and threatening to investigate and penalize private sector and educational institutions for protecting diversity and equal opportunity, are unconscionable and contrary to our American values.

Diversity is and will always be one of America's greatest strengths because a diverse America is an innovative and prosperous America. Diversifying our institutions, providing opportunities, and working to ensure that everyone is included are not partisan values. These values strengthen our nation and are rooted in our country's history of advancing equal opportunity and "liberty and justice for all." The majority of Americans support diversity, and research underscores this truth: 81 percent of Americans believe that companies should reflect the nation's racial diversity. Yet, these misguided actions by the Trump Administration seek to erode progress and stifle opportunity for all.

Numerous studies highlight how equal opportunity and diversity benefits the whole of our nation:

- A [2020 study by Citi](#) estimates that the United States would have gained \$16 trillion dollars in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) if we closed racial gaps in wages, access to higher education, lending, and mortgage access between 2000 and 2020.
- Similarly, a [2021 Brookings](#) study found that the U.S. GDP would have been \$22.9 trillion higher from 1990 to 2019 if opportunities and outcomes were more equally distributed by race and ethnicity.
- [McKinsey's](#) latest research (2023) showed that the bottom 25% of large firms in terms of ethnic diversity underperformed their peers by 24%, and the top 25% overperformed by 27%. Furthermore, the bottom 25% of firms by gender diversity underperformed their peers by 31%, and the top 25% overperformed by 18%.

America's strength and leadership in an increasingly diverse and competitive world depends on our ability to be an inclusive society. As the world's largest economy, America's success means ensuring equal opportunity for everyone, unlocking the full potential of our diverse talent and perspectives to drive progress well into the 21st century. Diversity, equity, and inclusion policies aim to eliminate recognized disadvantages, not create them. History has shown that without clear and specific guidelines that

encourage these core values, institutions continue discriminatory and exclusionary patterns that hold us all back.

- In Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023, the U.S. Department of Education [reported](#) the most civil rights complaints in its history, most of which allege discrimination based on race, sex, or disability.
- Black, Hispanic, and Asian American-owned businesses continue to face discrimination and bias in lending, are charged higher interest rates (3.09%, 2.91%, and 2.88%, respectively), and on average, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American-owned businesses [paid \\$8 billion more](#) in annual interest than white-owned firms.

The Demand Diversity Roundtable is committed to fighting back against all efforts that seek to limit economic and social mobility for any American, regardless of race, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability status. We believe that congressional leadership and action are integral in this moment to protect civil and human rights. Therefore, we respectfully and urgently request a meeting with you to discuss actionable steps to protect diversity, equity, and inclusion programs to ensure equal opportunity for all Americans.

We kindly ask your teams to contact Tara Murray, Executive Director of the National Urban League Washington Bureau, at tmurray@nul.org to arrange a meeting at your earliest convenience. We look forward to collaborating with you to protect and advance civil and human rights for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Marc H. Morial
President & CEO
National Urban League

Melanie Campbell
President & CEO
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation

Maya Berry
Executive Director
Arab American Institute (AAI)

Kimberlé Crenshaw
Co-Founder and Executive Director
African American Policy Forum

Fatima Goss Graves
President & CEO
National Women's Law Center

Damon Hewitt
President & Executive Director
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Reverend Al Sharpton
Founder & President
National Action Network

Reverend Shavon Arline-Bradley
President & CEO
National Council of Negro Women
(NCNW)

Brenda Victoria Castillo
President & CEO
National Hispanic Media Coalition

Alphonso David
President & CEO
Global Black Economic Forum

Margaret Huang
President & CEO
The Southern Poverty Law Center &
SPLC Action Fund

Derrick Johnson
President & CEO
NAACP

Sheila Katz
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Janai Nelson
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Gregg Orton
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Kelley Robinson
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Janet Murguía
President & CEO
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Virginia Kase Solomon
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President & Executive Director
Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)