



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ACCESS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity Joins the Lawsuit Against EO 13950

Organization of Equal Opportunity Professionals Seeks an End to This Unconstitutional Order on Race and Gender Stereotyping

Washington, DC, January 12, 2021 – Today AAAED, an association of equal opportunity, affirmative action and diversity professionals, joined a lawsuit to fight Executive Order (EO) 13950 on Combating Race and Gender Stereotyping. The original plaintiffs in this lawsuit are the National Urban League and the National Fair Housing Alliance.

AAAED President Richard Anthony Baker, MPA, JD, Ph.D. explained: "Some may ask why we have joined. Why would we join when it is expected that the new administration will rescind the order? Why would we join when others have already filed suit and achieved some success?" And the answer is simple: "We joined because of our members, the Equal Opportunity Professionals (EOPs).

The Order requires contractors, subcontractors, vendors, and potentially grantees to censor any use of language that falls within its highly vague definitions of "divisive concepts," "race or sex stereotyping," and "race or sex scapegoating."

In addition to the loss AAAED sustained when it had to cancel its Diversity Management training and the chilling effect of the EO when planning a webinar and training on civil rights laws and programs, the association learned through news reports, information from emails and its own survey that members were also confronted with concerns about how the Order could impact internal training or educational programs.

Dr. Baker added, " We understand that advocacy for the equal opportunity professional is our primary charge. We were founded to support EOPs and we have for over 46 years. We understood this executive order to be an obstacle to them and what all of us are trying to do within our respective organizations." AAAED issued a statement in opposition to EO 13950 on September 29, 2020 after the President's Order was issued. The Association wrote, "This Order flies in the face of the First Amendment and burdens Federal agencies with the role of a content review board."

AAAED also called on the incoming Biden Administration to immediately rescind the Order. The litigation that was proceeding in California has resulted in a preliminary injunction that has temporarily halted the enforcement of the Order. SANTA CRUZ LESBIAN AND GAY COMMUNITY CENTER d/b/a THE DIVERSITY CENTER OF SANTA CRUZ, et al., DONALD J. TRUMP, Case No. 20-cv-07741-BLF. "It is our fervent hope that this litigation and ours will further impress upon this administration and the next that the Order needs to be rescinded immediately," said Shirley J. Wilcher, AAAED Executive Director.

"In our collective fight for equal justice and against systems of discrimination, we all must do what we can to make sure that we are able to learn and work in environments that are free from bigotry and bias," added Dr. Baker. "With members of the equal opportunity profession at the forefront of our mind our mission is clear," he continued. "The decision to join this lawsuit was made carefully, but unequivocally in support of what we stand for and believe."

The plaintiffs in this action, National Urban League, National Fair Housing Alliance and AAAED, are represented by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. AAAED is also represented by Pro Bono Counsel, Winston & Strawn LLP.

For a copy of the amended complaint in *National Urban League, et al. v. Trump*, click here:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/ebf58109001/f8fb2016-47d3-4ea6-b472-e3018530741f.pdf>

Exhibit to Complaint: <https://files.constantcontact.com/ebf58109001/f801cf00-0cf6-4f6a-abcc-0dda756e2549.pdf>

For a copy of AAAED's Statement on EO 13950, click here:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/ebf58109001/964ac7dd-8922-437f-b138-ee9f4db3ddbf.pdf>

To see the NAACP Legal Defense Fund news release, click here: <https://www.naacpldf.org/press-release/ldf-files-amended-complaint-in-lawsuit-challenging-trump-administration-executive-order-american-association-for-access-equity-and-diversity-joins-as-plaintiff/>

For more information about AAAED, go to: www.aaaed.org.

To join AAAED, click here: https://www.aaaed.org/aaaed/Join_Us.asp

Founded in 1974 as the American Association for Affirmative Action (AAAA), AAAED is a national not-for-profit association of professionals working in the areas of equal opportunity, compliance and diversity. The longest-serving representative of individuals in the equal opportunity and diversity professions, AAAED has 46 years of leadership providing quality professional training to practitioners and promoting understanding and advocacy of affirmative action and other equal opportunity laws. Nearly one-half of its membership is composed of EEO professionals working for academic institutions.

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