



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ACCESS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

AAAED Statement About the U.S. Capitol Insurrection

This insurrection revealed the distance that we have yet to go to come together as a nation and achieve the dream of equality for all.

Washington, DC, January 11, 2021 — — On Wednesday, January 6, 2021 we witnessed an attack on our nation’s democracy never before seen since the War of 1812. What makes this more tragic is that it was apparently instigated and encouraged by some in whose care the U.S. Constitution is entrusted.

As civil rights advocates for decades, we who defend the disadvantaged—from the Marches on Washington to the Women’s Marches, to the Black Lives Matter demonstrations—have never trod upon nor disrespected our national institutions of government. What we witnessed was an unimaginable outrage. If not for a courageous few, many more than the five individuals who lost their lives could have been harmed. In fact, present and at risk during this uprising were none other than the Vice President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Senate Majority Leader and members of both houses who were meeting to certify the results of a duly conducted election.

Not only were lives lost during this insurgency; truth was a casualty and has been the victim since the word went out from the highest levels of government that the November election was “stolen.” Even after countless recounts and failed lawsuits, this disinformation campaign persisted, culminating in the invitation of an angry mob to the nation’s Capital. The insurrectionists were misled by those sworn to uphold the Constitution, but who exhorted them to “Stop the Steal” by storming the United States Capitol.

We also witnessed the palpable inequality of treatment between the insurrectionists who desecrated the building built by slaves, where the statue of Freedom stands at its pinnacle, and the treatment given those who stood for equality at the Black Lives Matter demonstrations last summer. Not only was the appallingly flagrant disparate treatment enjoyed by the mostly white insurrectionists who stormed the Capitol, compared with the diverse assembly of demonstrators fighting for fairness in police enforcement, shockingly obvious, it is clear that the underlying motivation of many invited to breach the Capitol was racism and bigotry.

Never had the “confederate” flag flown in the People’s House until this week. Moreover, black Capitol police officers complained of being called racial epithets while carrying out their duties. Videos also showed the brandishing of Nazi symbols by some determined to disrupt the counting of ballots.

The American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity (AAAED) stands with those determined to restore the rule of law and the nation’s democratic processes for all Americans. We commend the Congress and Vice President Pence for standing up for the Constitution in the face of the uprising and voting, even though it was early morning before their work was done.

We firmly expect that justice will be done; that the Congress will appoint oversight committees and re-establish the respect of and balance between the three branches of government. We also call on the incoming Administration to conduct a thorough examination of the processes, policies and personnel that so easily exposed our Capitol and our democracy to this open insurrection. While the review takes place, we also hope that the nation can get on with the business of ensuring access, equity and diversity. This uprising revealed the distance that we have yet to go to come together as a nation and achieve the dream of equality for all.

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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.

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

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