

Executive Disorder: Mapping the War on Equal Opportunity

AAPF Talking Points (February 2025)



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: A Framework for a Stronger, More Inclusive Society

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion refers to long-standing and widely-shared values to create fair opportunities, diversify our institutions, and ensure that everyone is included.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion ensures that all people—regardless of race, gender, ability, or background—fair access to opportunities that help them thrive.
- Incorporating diverse perspectives and lived experiences strengthens our workplaces, schools, and institutions by enhancing complex decision-making..
- Inclusion is an ongoing project of the civil rights movement to ensure no one is left behind.
- **Key Examples:**
 - Businesses with diverse leadership perform better and make more innovative decisions.
 - Schools that embrace inclusive curricula prepare students for a globalized world.
 - Policies rooted in equity help bridge the gap in access to resources and opportunities.

The Fight Isn't Just Against Policy— It's a Fight Against the Erasure of Inclusive Efforts and Civil Rights

- The Trump administration's Executive Orders underscore what we've been saying since 2020: Attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Intersectionality were just a gateway to a broader redefinition and dismantling of civil rights.
- This isn't just about undoing policies; it's about keeping people from well earned positions and rewriting history.
- This is about fear and power. This Administration wants to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion policies because they know that an informed public is a powerful public. This is just the beginning. Every rollback on diversity, equity and inclusion policies is a step toward a more divided, unequal society.

Trump's Goal: An Agenda to Resegregate America Steeped in Anti-Blackness

- This all-out assault on racial and gender equity initiatives first emerged as an attack on Critical Race Theory in 2020.
- Trump's executive orders are designed to push Black and other marginalized communities out of all positions of leadership at all levels because they view them as inherently inferior to white men. That's why they refer to such persons in leadership as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), hires or candidates, no matter their qualifications.

- When they strip diversity efforts from government, they're targeting people of color and Black people in particular. Because Black Americans are often locked out of the best job networks in corporate America, they are twice as likely to be employed in the public sector as in the private sector. Hence, targeting diversity and equity disproportionately harms these workers.
- Eliminating diverse perspectives, comprehensive history and access to knowledge, takes away our ability to forge the tools to fight back.

Anti-Racism Is Pro-Democracy

- Ask yourself: Why do they weaponize Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)? Because an attack on anti-racist efforts is an attack on our democracy, and any attack on our democracy has historically come from the heels of racism.
- Attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Critical Race Theory (CRT) and any semblance of racial progress over the years are all part of a larger attack on a multiracial democracy and racial justice.
- When leaders try to erase systemic racism from education and policy, they are trying to remove the tools we need to fight it.
- This isn't just about policy; it's about power. And we refuse to let them take ours away.

Stay Informed & Take Action: Protecting Our Rights Is the Fight of Our Lives

- This is a fight for our future, and we won't back down. We need everyone engaged: sharing information, speaking out, and holding leaders accountable.
 - Share these talking points with your network to make sure people understand what's at stake.
 - Get involved: Call your representatives, support organizations that are fighting back, and make your voice heard online and offline.
 - [Join the Fight Now](#): Sign up to receive our rapid response email for alerts about unfolding events and ways to be heard and take action.
- The African American Policy Forum (AAPF) will continue to provide resources and tools so people can stay informed and, as a result, empowered.
- [Under the Blacklight](#): By centering the experiences of marginalized communities, this series explores how race, class, gender, and other identities intersect to exacerbate vulnerability during times of crisis. *Under the Blacklight* offers critical insights and tools for advocacy and reform. It is a vital part of AAPF's ongoing work to advance racial justice and advocate for transformative change.
- [Intersectionality Matters!](#): Hosted by Kimberlé Crenshaw, this podcast features thought-provoking discussions with experts and activists on pressing racial justice issues. The show features diverse voices and perspectives, making it a vital platform for education and engagement. And a new series on the show, explaining **what Critical Race Theory really is** —is available now on every podcast platform.
- [Critical Research](#): AAPF's extensive research initiatives, like the Black Girls Matter Report and the Race-Forward Messaging Project, provide valuable data and analysis on systemic racism and social justice issues.. These resources are essential for advocates, scholars, and anyone seeking to understand and combat inequality.