



May 16, 2023

Flag Officers 4 America

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker of the House
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Washington, DC, 20515-0520

The Honorable Hakeem S. Jeffries
House Minority Leader
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Washington, DC, 20515-3208

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
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The Honorable Mike Rogers
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2469 Rayburn House Office Building
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Speaker McCarthy, House Minority Leader Jeffries, Chairman Rogers and Chairman Calvert

We respectfully request that Congress, pursuant to its constitutional powers "...to raise and support Armies..." and "... to provide and maintain a Navy..." take legislative action to remove all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs from the Department of Defense (DoD). Additionally, we ask that you ensure no DEI related policies, programs, and funding are included in the 2024 NDAA.

As our Nation faces looming threats from "foreign" adversaries/enemies, our military is under assault from a culture war stemming from "domestic" ideologically inspired political policies and practices. If not stopped now, they will forever change the military's warrior ethos essential to performing its mission of deterring aggression and failing that, to fight and win our Nation's wars. Our military must be laser focused on one mission—readiness, undiminished by the culture war engulfing our country.

For generations, our military was a meritocracy, which simply defined means selection and advancement based solely on merit and ability. Service Members (SMs) were judged not by the color of their skin but by their character, duty performance, and potential. Meritocracy, coupled with equal opportunity, created conditions for all to advance and excel, which stimulates healthy competition, thereby raising standards. Historically, our military has been one of, if not the most, diverse and inclusive institution in America.

The domestic cultural threat has an innocuous name: "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI). But, in reality DEI is dividing, not uniting, our military and society. DEI's principles derive from critical race theory, which is rooted in cultural Marxism, where people are grouped into identity classes (typically by race), labeled as "oppressed" or "oppressors," and pitted against each other. Under the guise of DEI, some people are selected for career enhancing opportunities and advancement based on preferences given to identity groups based on race, gender, ethnic

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background, sexual orientation, etc. For example, the DoD twice admitted to using race in service academy admissions in its 2022 amicus brief in the pending Supreme Court college admissions cases.

Our military has practiced “equality” by giving equal opportunities for all to achieve. The equality approach ignores skin color, gender, or ethnicity seeing all SMs as equal, with a common set of values and mission. This does not diminish their individuality, but rather celebrates their dedication to duty and a higher noble calling of selfless service to our Nation.

DEI’s “Equity” sounds benign, but in practice it lowers standards. While equality provides equal opportunities, equity’s goal is equal outcomes. To achieve equal outcomes using identity group characteristics, standards must be lowered to accommodate the desired equity outcomes. Lower standards reduce performance where even slight differences in capability impact readiness and can determine war fighting mission success or failure.

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) practices use identity-based preferences in selections for career schools and promotions. As with equity, D&I lowers standards by not always selecting the best qualified to become pilots, academy cadets, leaders at all ranks, etc. Identity based preferences create friction and distrust in the ranks, damaging unit cohesion, teamwork and unity of effort, further degrading readiness.

The “One Team, One Fight” battle motto describes a meritocracy-based military characterized by:

- a common mission and purpose;
- unqualified loyalty to the team and not to an individual’s identity group;
- total trust and confidence in each other for their very lives from the foxhole to the highest level;
- teamwork/camaraderie resulting in the unit cohesion essential for warfighting readiness.

Meritocracy is essential for winning. In professional sports - where the mission is to win games - the best players are fielded to win, no matter their skin color. If meritocracy is used in sports where the consequence of losing a game is minor, why is it not essential in the military where the worst-case consequences of losing a major war are unimaginable losses of life, destruction, and perhaps our Nation? To win, the best qualified SMs must be selected to lead America’s sons and daughters into life and death situations. Meritocracy wins games and it wins wars!

We have fought for our Nation and are sounding the alarm that DEI poses a grave danger to our military warfighting ethos and is degrading warfighting readiness. Social engineering, commonly called “wokeism,” has no place in our military. China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea are not distracted by DEI programs; no doubt they are watching us. Equal opportunity and merit-based performance have been battle tested for generations and proven essential for success. DEI policies and practices must be eliminated from the DoD to protect our critical warfighting readiness.

Respectfully submitted,

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