

For Information Contact:
Human Rights Commission Liaison,
Raul Torres (703)792-4680

Statement of the Chair of the Prince William Human Rights Commission

The Prince William County Human Rights Commission, serving the tenth most diverse county in the nation, is committed to ensuring that each citizen and resident is treated fairly, provided equal protection of the law, and afforded equal opportunity in the benefits, rights, and privileges of community life. As such, the commission expresses its concern regarding recent government actions to undermine the protection established by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Specifically, efforts to weaken the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), eliminate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs, and restrict rights for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ (LGBTQ+) community under Title VII.

The EEOC is a bipartisan, independent agency that is vital in enforcing anti-discrimination laws. Leaving the Commission without a quorum hinders the agency's ability to investigate discrimination complaints and issue guidance to employers and employees. These efforts to weaken the EEOC go directly against the core mission of the Civil Rights Act: to promote equality and ensure fair treatment for all individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Moreover, the move to eliminate DEI programs, designed to address systemic inequalities in workplaces and educational institutions, risks reversing progress in creating more inclusive environments. DEI initiatives are crucial in helping organizations foster diverse, equitable, and inclusive spaces that reflect the realities of our diverse society. Without these programs, marginalized communities could face greater barriers to equal opportunity, which is contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Additionally, the erosion of protections for the LGBTQ+ community under Title VII threatens the hard-fought victories gained through legal battles and activism. Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity should not be tolerated in any setting, yet recent government actions seek to strip these communities of vital civil rights protection.

Prince William County citizens and residents can rest assured the Prince William County Human Rights Commission will continue to protect and enforce all human and civil rights laws under our authority.

For more information, please visit our website: pwcva.gov/humanrights