

SJ0003_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON SJ#0003 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - The American Dream

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of **SJ#0003, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - The American Dream**

In January 2025, CNN reported on *What is DEI, and why is it dividing America?*¹

What is DEI?

Among seven DEI experts and industry leaders CNN has interviewed, most had a shared vision for what constitutes the concept:

- **Diversity** is embracing the differences everyone brings to the table, whether those are someone's race, age, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability or other aspects of social identity.
- **Equity** is treating everyone fairly and providing equal opportunities.
- **Inclusion** is respecting everyone's voice and creating a culture in which people from all backgrounds feel encouraged to express their ideas and perspectives.
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DEI was created because marginalized communities have not always had equal opportunities for jobs or felt a sense of belonging in majority-White corporate settings, said Daniel Oppong, founder of The Courage Collective, a consultancy that advises companies on DEI.

"That is the genesis of why some of these programs exist," he said. "It was an attempt to try to create workplaces where more or all people can thrive."

The Federal administration and their supporters believe that anything that does not advantage white cis-gendered Christian males is automatically DEI and must be suppressed and outlawed. They do not believe that any minority whether BIPOC or LGBTQ+ or any woman could have equal opportunities in society based on their knowledge and character and ability which can, in any way, shape, or time, exceed the favored group even if that is demonstrably false.

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2025/01/22/us/dei-diversity-equity-inclusion-explained/index.html>

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This resolution acknowledges that the anti-DEI narrative is false and is harmful to the residents of Maryland. The resolution is to declare that we are affirming Maryland's commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as a foundation of the American Dream. It will accomplish that goal by encouraging local, State, and federal policymakers, educational institutions, workplaces, and other organizations to adopt and uphold DEI principles.

As the late Senator Paul Wellstone and Maryland Comptroller Brooke Lierman have stated “We all do better when we all do better”. The American Dream promotes DEI as the path to achieve that for everyone; this resolution says that Maryland understands this paradigm and will implement it as a policy throughout the institutions and businesses and educational bodies in our state.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SJ0003.