

HEARING IN A BOX

Freedom to Be Heard
Field Hearing

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Purpose

Purpose of a Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearing

Purpose

A Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearing is meant to connect communities and legislators/policymakers in open discussions on how diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies, practices, and principles impact pathways for individuals and communities to access the American Dream. These can be used to expand the dialogue and engagement of both communities and legislators when the state legislature is out of session, which supports these issues staying front of mind for key stakeholders.

What

A field hearing should be hosted outside of the state capitol, in geographies across the state to meet communities where they're at. The hearing is an opportunity to collect testimonies on how diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies impact individuals and communities – both how anti-DEI narratives and laws harm constituents in tangible and destructive ways, and how pro-DEI policies and narratives bolster communities and improve individual life experiences. Testimony gathered in a hearing can be used to inform priorities and shape policies for legislators to move on in the coming legislative session, as well elevate the collective voice of communities to share their stories and take control of the public narrative on these issues.

Why Now

Policies that intersect with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) continue to dominate state legislatures across the country, with over 450 DEI-related bills introduced during state legislative sessions in 2025 alone. These issues touch all communities and impact many elements in people's everyday lives. With an increasing public narrative and federal directives coming out around DEI that are misleading and ill-informed, the time is now to reclaim the narrative on DEI and the reality of its history and impact in our communities. Creating space for individuals to share their testimonies of these issues in their lives and for legislators to meet communities where they are at will allow a more informed public debate and policy priorities.

One-Pager

A copy of this document [can be found here](#), so you can make edits and use for your planning and outreach.

Freedom to Be Heard

Field Hearing Backgrounder

A Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearing is a tool for leaders in business, education, and healthcare; students and teachers; and other community members to share stories and testimony about how diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies, practices, and principles support them and their communities, creating pathways to access the American Dream. The hearing also creates space to share how anti-DEI arguments and laws harm them in tangible and destructive ways. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are core American values that ensure everyone has fair access to opportunity and a chance to achieve their American Dream. Without diversity, equity, and inclusion, our workplaces and schools see diminished innovation, creativity, and problem solving; our economy sees weaker financial output and global competitiveness; and our society faces increased polarization and fragmentation. These field hearings serve as a bridge between the previous and next legislative sessions to inform policy development and build power amongst a vast array of community groups, sectors, issues, and interests.

Field Hearing Goals

- ❖ Define diversity, equity, and inclusion in our own words, creating a counter-narrative to the anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion arguments.
- ❖ Broaden the general public’s knowledge about diversity, equity, and inclusion and the impact on a broad range of issues.
- ❖ Hold the anti-DEI movement accountable for the harms that they have caused.
- ❖ Document and amplify the stories of people with diverse identities who are negatively impacted by discrimination and bad policy- like anti-DEI policies in the corporate, education, and medical sectors, anti-lgbtq legislation, books bans, etc.
- ❖ Build momentum for the future legislative strategy.

The schedule of Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearings are as follows:

Date and Time	Region	Location

[People from state] interested in attending a field hearing are highly encouraged to RSVP via:
[INSERT RSVP FORM LINK]

Logistic Guidance

Key Decision Points for Planning

- ❖ **Confirm Legislators Convening Field Hearing**
 - Option 1: Group of legislators consists only of members that represent the area where a hearing will be hosted.
 - Option 2: Coordinate field hearing with a core group of legislators from all around the state leading on this issue, ensuring to include members who represent the area where the hearing will be hosted.
- ❖ **Determine Coordinating Lead(s) for the Hearings**
 - This person/small group of people will coordinate across teams and offices, delegate tasks and responsibilities, and hold the overall project management of field hearings.
- ❖ **Develop Strategic Vision & Goals for Field Hearings**
 - The material in this toolkit is a framework, but you may want to develop some goals and framing that are specific to your state (i.e. how will you use testimony, how does this hearing serve your overall caucus strategy, etc.).
- ❖ **Determine if You Have Security Concerns for Hearings**
 - This can impact further decisions on security needs and press/public outreach.
- ❖ **Confirm Source of Streaming/Recording Field Hearings**
 - For past Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearings, we've seen some groups partner with local media stations to stream hearings and other groups stream through their own social media or caucus platforms. Both work, you will just need to know this for planning and logistic purposes as early in the process as possible.
- ❖ **Determine Accessibility and Inclusivity Provisions**
 - We recommend that you provide childcare to attendees (a space in the venue with certified caregivers for attendees to drop off their children). This will allow for more accessibility to key stakeholders for participation.
 - Consider translation services that meet the needs of the community you are in.
 - Consider ASL translation.

Logistics: Tips and Learnings

Logistics are listed in order of when they should be completed.

- ❖ [2 Months Out] Confirm Location, Date, & Time of Hearing
 - Recommendation: Try to confirm these as far out as possible so you have time to plan.
 - Recommendation: If you are organizing multiple field hearings, try to host hearings in a diverse selection of areas to ensure you are reaching key communities and stakeholders from across the state.
- ❖ [2 Months Out] Conduct Targeted Outreach to Speakers
 - Recommendation: Begin this outreach as soon as you have location, date, and time confirmed so that you can build a robust list of speakers.
 - Further recommendations and templates for outreach can be found in this toolkit.
- ❖ [1 Month Out] Book Venue(s)
 - Recommendation: Ideally this would be confirmed at least a month out from the hearing date.
 - An Ideal Venue: is ADA accessible; has ample parking; has A/V set up and equipment or is able to have A/V brought in; has table and chairs (enough for a check in table, table for legislators, and chairs for legislators and all attendees); podium for speakers providing testimony; additional space for childcare (should you decide to provide it).
 - Venues can be a significant cost, so try to leverage relationships to book community event spaces that may be lend or offered at discounts. These kinds of venues tend to meet many of the needs noted above as well.
- ❖ [1 Month Out] Create Save the Dates and Outreach Materials
 - Recommendation: Design initial materials early in the planning process (even before dates and venues are confirmed) so that you can easily plug in confirmed details as soon as you have them to finalize materials as soon as possible.
 - Templates and examples can be found in this toolkit.

Logistics: Tips and Learnings

Logistics are listed in order of when they should be completed.

- ❖ [1 Month Out] Confirm Accessibility & Inclusion Provisions
 - Recommendation: It is best to have these provisions confirmed before you start outreach, so that you are promoting those elements.
 - Note: this includes childcare options, ASL services, other language (Spanish, Mandarin, Creole, etc.) translation, etc.
- ❖ [2–3 Weeks Out] Conduct Community Outreach to Drive Attendance
 - Recommendation: Start this as soon as you have the previous logistical elements confirmed – you want as much time as possible to build awareness and participation.
 - Note: Even if you decide not to publicly promote the hearings, you will need to conduct outreach with trusted partners and provide them materials to invite their members. The same timeline applies.
 - Recommendation: Outreach and promotion should be regular over the course of time between initial outreach and the day of the hearings – people may need multiple touch points before registering, and registrants should get reminders to keep this on their calendars.
 - Recommendation: Share outreach materials with confirmed speakers so they can circulate to their networks.
- ❖ [2 Weeks Out] Confirm Platform and Equipment for Livestream
 - Note: The equipment and setup requirements will be determined by the platform/medium for livestream (i.e. social media feed, media site feed, other website/platform).
- ❖ [2 Weeks Out] Conduct Outreach to Press and Media
 - Note: Even if you decide not to use press for promotion, you should still plan to give notice of the hearing for post-event press release.
 - Recommendation: Ideally press outreach should start 2 weeks out from hearings.
 - Additional recommendations and templates can be found in this toolkit.

Logistics: Tips and Learnings

Logistics are listed in order of when they should be completed.

- ❖ [1–2 Weeks Out] Create Social Media Toolkit for During and Post-Hearings
 - Recommendation: You'll want to share these in advance so that teams can plan out their social media engagement.
 - Recommendation: Use template formatted for multiple platforms (Instagram, Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Bluesky, TikTok, etc.).
 - Note: These toolkits should be used to help attendees and allies amplify the themes to take away from the hearing and what the action items/asks are to address community need.
- ❖ [1–2 Weeks Out] Share Talking Points with Legislators and Key Stakeholder Partners
 - Recommendations: You want to share these in advance to give legislators and key stakeholders language and framework to build a consistent message and narrative.
 - Talking Points can be found in this toolkit.
- ❖ [DAY OF] Tasks to Cover the Day of the Hearing
 - Share livestream link with registrants, stakeholders, and relevant partners.
 - Provide Internal Agenda with Run of Show for the Event.
 - Set Up Check In Space
 - Table by the entrance with a dedicated staffer or volunteer.
 - Collect names and emails for follow up.
 - Have speaker cards and encourage attendees to provide testimony during the public comment portion of the agenda.
 - Share hashtag and social media handles for the event (if you have one) to encourage folks to engage.
 - Set Up Hearing Room
 - Legislators table (with gavel, tablecloth and water)
 - Attendee seating (with reserved seats in front for confirmed speakers)
 - Speaker podium
 - Set Up A/V and Translation Services.
 - Set Up Childcare Space.

Logistics: Tips and Learnings

Logistics are listed in order of when they should be completed.

❖ Post-Event Tasks

- Day after the hearing: Write and send a post-event press release to media contacts, highlighting the key takeaways from the testimony, overall messaging, and any next steps or action items to highlight.
- Day after the hearing: Write and send a thank you email to attendees, highlighting key takeaways, asks/next steps, and any resources.
- 1-Week After (and then any sequence you decide after that): Collect news clips and social media round-up from hearing.
 - Note: You may want to share a highlight of clippings on your social media to continue to boost the hearing.

Managing the Field Hearing

Sample Field Hearing Agenda: Freedom To Be Heard Field Hearing

- I. Pre-Field Hearing Press Availability
- II. Gavel In
- III. Review of Field Hearing Agenda and Rules of Order
- IV. Member Introductions
- V. Special Recognitions
- VI. Opening Statement
- VII. Scheduled Public Testimony
 - A. Sample Speaker Order: Name and Affiliation (if applicable)
 1. We recommend that in addition to calling up the next speaker, to also name the next two people on deck so they have time to prepare themselves and move towards the speaker podium or table.
- VIII. Open Public Comment
 - A. This is a time for community members to provide testimony about how anti-DEI or discriminatory legislation/policies/rhetoric has negatively impacted them. This is not a time for attendees to ask questions of legislators; it should function just as a committee meeting would function.
- IX. Closing Statements and Adjournment
 - A. Note: Field hearings have ranged from 1 hour to 3 hours depending on the volume of attendance and enforcement of testimony time limits.
- X. Potential Post-Field Hearing Press Availability

Tips for Field Hearing Agenda

- ❖ For an engaging field hearing that allows as many people to participate, it is helpful to have a time limit for testimony and provide a 1 minute warning before a speaker's time is up. Prior field hearings utilized and enforced time limits ranging from 3 to 5 minutes. Although past field hearings have ranged from 1 hour to 3 hours, the optimal length for engagement and robust testimony is 1.5 hours.
- ❖ One of the benefits of selecting speakers in advance is being able to order them in a compelling way. The agenda is a great opportunity to ensure that not only are a diversity of voices, people, and sectors represented, but that there is texture in who is speaking when. In other words, we suggest you order your speaker list in part by themes that will likely be touched upon, maybe having the Chief DEI Officer and other people who can speak on DEI more broadly start and end the field hearing, while specific issue areas can be organized in between. However, it is also important to make sure that there is no imbalance with who has the opportunity to speak first and who has to likely wait longer to speak at the end. Make sure your speakers know when they will speak and that they do not have any time constraints when creating the speaker order list.

Outreach

Identifying and Reaching out to Speakers/Testifiers

Tips and Learnings

- ❖ **Designate Speakers in Advance:** this will help you curate a robust and cohesive sequence of testimony, and ensure that a diversity of sectors, content, and identities are represented.
- ❖ **Center Storytelling:** encourage each speaker to share openly, and personally to highlight what diversity, equity, and inclusion means to them, what work they do around DEI/against discrimination, how they are negatively impacted by discrimination and anti-DEI policies, or how they benefit from DEI programs.
- ❖ **Provide Details and Guidance to Speakers:** notify speakers in advance how much time they will have to testify, the other confirmed speakers, etc.
- ❖ **Recruit Speakers from Wide Array of Backgrounds:**
 - Teachers
 - Professors
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Small Businesses
 - Large Corporations
 - Health Care Professionals
 - Veterans
 - People whose identities and/or work intersect with racial justice, gender equity, disability rights, and/or LGBTQ+ equality
 - Unions
 - The Arts (especially if there as an industry like music that is heavily represented in the area)
 - Local sports players and/or administrators
 - Faith leaders
 - Agriculture/Farmers/Environmental Sector
 - Other relevant groups and/or sectors and issues from the geography where the field hearing is being held

Sample Outreach Language

Below is a template email to reach out to community members asking them to testify at the field hearing. Send this along with the save the date (templates in this guide).

[You can make a copy and edit the template here.](#)

Dear [recipient],

[WHO] are hosting an in-district field hearing titled "Freedom to Be Heard," centered around the topic of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) throughout the state. We want to address issues that are relevant to the community around overreaching discrimination and bad policies, like book bans, anti-lgbtq legislation, etc. We also want to hear from corporations, businesses, government, faith-based communities, advocacy groups, and others on how they address DEI.

The field hearing will function with the formalness of an official legislative hearing, but one that just happens to be in the community. Our hope is this provides a space for our presenters to be able to testify and truly tell their stories and how it affects their organization or them personally.

The [CITY] field hearing will take place on [DAY], [DATE] from [TIME]. with the field hearing beginning promptly at [TIME] in [VENUE].

The event is open to the public.

We would like to have someone from [SECTOR OF PERSON YOU ARE REACHING OUT TO] come and testify for 3-5 mins about the importance of DEI policies [TO THE SECTOR, TO YOUR ISSUE AREA, TO YOU], and if possible share personal testimony of the harms that occur when they are not in place and the benefits they bring when they are.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you

[Outreach Coordinator Name]

Invites to Press and Media

Tips and Learnings

- ❖ **Confirm Local Media Coverage of Field Hearing**
 - Reach out to any media contacts you may have using the press announcement template.
 - You can contact news organizations by going to their website and finding the “contact us” section and emailing them the press release.
- ❖ **Reach Out to Both Editors and Local Reporters**
 - This will help ensure maximum coverage.
- ❖ **Advertise on Social Media, Local Print, Radio, and TV**
 - This will help increase attendance and awareness.
 - Some of these may require funds for advertising, so plan for what is financially realistic.
- ❖ **Reach Out to a Wide Range of Outlets**
 - For example: non-English news outlets and organizations, radio and video news organizations in addition to print and online websites.
- ❖ **Translate and Conduct Press Outreach in Languages that are Prominent in Your Area**
 - The templates provided are in English, but if you are reaching out to communities and media outlets that publish in other language, work to translate outreach accordingly.
- ❖ **Reach Out to State and National Media Outlets**
 - While local media is a priority, these issues touch communities across the state and country, so inviting state and national media could result in elevating these issues to broader audiences.
 - Many state and national outlets have local correspondents.

Press Announcement Template

[You can make a copy and edit the template here.](#)

[WHO] to host Freedom to Be Heard Hearing on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives

Leaders in [business, education and healthcare] will testify [DAY OF THE WEEK/DATE] at a field hearing assembled by [WHO] **OR** [Organizers] invite community voices to push back against conservative attacks on business and education initiatives.

[WHO] will host a field hearing [DAY OF THE WEEK / DATE] to discuss the value of initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. This hearing, featuring [WHO], will take place at [LOCATION] on [DATE] at [TIME].

This hearing will gather representatives from [CITY/TOWN] business, medical and education communities to testify about their experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, principles, and practices. The discussion will focus on the impact and importance of inclusive policies at a time when Republican officials have passed several “divisive concepts” laws targeting speech at K-12 public schools and colleges, proposed legislation to ban DEI policies at public universities, established a process to ban books, and threatened lawsuits against companies that employ DEI tactics.

[INSERT QUOTE FROM ONE OF THE ORGANIZERS/PEOPLE HOSTING]

[city] community members, including teachers, students, parents, activists and business leaders, will share their personal stories and concerns. They will be joined by advocates from local and national organizations and businesses including [NAME PRE-SELECTED SPEAKERS].

The hearing is free and open to the public with the option/opportunity for public comment. It will be livestreamed on [LOCATION].

Event: Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearing

Date:

Time:

Location:

Media is invited to attend. You can RSVP by emailing [insert contact’s information]

[Insert Save The Date Graphic]

[Insert livestream link if available]

Post-Hearing Press Release Template

Goals:

- ❖ To earn post-hearing press coverage, you should send out a press release highlighting the key themes, messaging, and speakers.
- ❖ Post-hearing social media posts and an op-ed strategy can help earn press coverage and forward the narrative of state champions standing together in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ❖ [You can make a copy and edit the template here.](#)

For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE FOR: [DATE]

CONTACT: [Media Contact]

[HOST'S] Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearing Reveals [KEY TAKEAWAY / THEME FROM HEARING]

*The "Freedom To Be Heard" Field Hearing gathered community members, activists, and business leaders to discuss [the real-life harm of regressive anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion policies] **OR** [the real-life impacts and benefits of diversity, equity, and inclusion policies]*

CITY, State. – Today, [HOST] hosted a "Freedom To Be Heard" Field Hearing at [WHERE] in [CITY]. This hearing provided an opportunity for [PEOPLE FROM STATE] to have their voices heard on how regressive efforts to prioritize culture wars and dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion are not only harmful for our state, but also distract lawmakers from addressing critical issues impacting [PEOPLE FROM STATE's] families.

[CITY] community members, including teachers, students, parents, activists and business leaders, shared their personal stories and concerns. They were joined by [WHO IS ON THE PANEL/HOSTING GROUPS].

[INSERT QUOTES FROM 1-2 SPEAKERS]

In [STATE], and other states across the country, opponents of equity have passed and implemented anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion laws in an effort to restore barriers to the American Dream. The "Freedom to Be Heard" Field Hearing is an opportunity for [PEOPLE FROM STATE] to voice how these policies have real, personal consequences for [people from state] of all backgrounds and how diversity, equity, and inclusion policies and values support them and their communities.

[Insert link to recording]

Considerations and Learnings for Conducting Community Outreach for Turnout

- ❖ Achieving high turnout is a group effort amongst legislators, organizations, and selected speakers/testifiers. You must leverage legislator community relationships and memberships, especially if you decide to not publicize your event through social media and other more public streams.
- ❖ Identify individuals (legislators, prominent community figures, other electeds) and groups (partner organizations, unions, community centers, religious centers) who can lead community outreach and spread the word. Think about the diversity in speakers to be reflected in diversity of turnout.
- ❖ Materials you should use/resources to pull from, which are all included in this toolkit.
 - One-pager explaining/describing the hearing
 - Save the date
 - Social media toolkit
 - Timeline (make sure to start early and not rely on only one or two turnout pushes)

RSVP Form/Tracker

- ❖ The purpose of this form is to get a headcount of who will likely attend the hearing and measure the efficiency of turnout and outreach efforts.
- ❖ It can also be a tool to track and increase pre-selected speakers.
- ❖ The RSVP form also builds an email list to send out reminders to beforehand and post-hearing follow-up communications and next-steps.
- ❖ The RSVP form should collect the following information:
 - Name
 - Email Address
 - Affiliation and Role (optional)
 - Address / Zip Code (optional – zip code will help you do targeted follow up for congressional districts)
 - Do you plan on testifying?
 - What will you speak about?
- ❖ The RSVP form should include:
 - Save the date graphic with information about what, when, and where.
 - Optional: a place to upload written/recorded testimony to the story collection google drive to increase opportunities for storytelling.

Communications Materials

Save The Date

Goals

- ❖ This is meant to promote the field hearing, assisting in boosting turnout and recruiting speakers.
- ❖ If you are conducting outreach via social media, you and your partners can circulate a graphic to promote the field hearing.
- ❖ The save the date can be shared in newsletters, on listservs, and amongst independent organizations, community members, and legislators (if applicable) to promote and notify community members about the field hearing.

Should Include:

- ❖ “Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearing”
- ❖ Who is hosting and organizing the event, and, if applicable, who is on the panel.
- ❖ When and where the field hearing is.
- ❖ Open to the public.
- ❖ Note included accommodations (such as childcare, ASL, and language interpreters, etc. that will be provided).
- ❖ Embedded link or QR code to RSVP to register for the event.

Save The Date Examples

**The Office of the
Senate and House Minority Leader
presents
FREEDOM TO BE HEARD
MEMPHIS FIELD HEARING**



Senator Raumesh Akbari
Senate Minority Leader



Representative Karen Camper
House Minority Leader



Senator London Lamar



Senator Sara Kyle



Representative Jesse Chism



Representative Torrey Harris

We want to hear from our constituents and business leaders about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion and the harms caused by laws dismantling diversity. Don't miss this upcoming opportunity to attend this important in-district hearing.

**Monday, June 17
5:00 p.m.
The National Civil Rights Museum**

Open to the public. Childcare, ASL and Spanish interpreters will be provided.

FREEDOM TO BE **HEARD** 2024

CAUCUS SUMMER FIELD HEARINGS

JULY 22

TAMPA BAY REGIONAL

Tampa River Center
402 W Laurel St. Tampa, Fla. 33607

CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL

Orlando, Fla.

JULY 23

JULY 24

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL

The Pride Center at Equality Park
2040 Dixie Hwy. Wilton Manors, Fla. 33305



**FLORIDA
HOUSE
DEMOCRATS**



FREEDOM TO BE HEARD

Summer Field Hearings



Rep. Carolyn Hugley
HD 141
Committee Chair

AUGUST 14, 2024
6:00 PM

NATIONAL CENTER FOR CIVIL & HUMAN RIGHTS
100 Ivan Allen Drive NW | Atlanta 30313

From civil rights to gender rights to labor and education, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a centuries-old movement dedicated to upholding the freedom for all Americans to access life, liberty and happiness. This August, join Georgia's state legislative members of the 'Freedom to Be Heard' committee to broaden the general public's knowledge about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and hear more about its impact on a broad range of issues, industries, and people across the state. Click [here](#) to sign up to testify.

FREEDOM TO BE HEARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Rep. Imani Barnes
HD 86



Rep. Lisa Campbell
HD 35



Rep. Phil Olaleye
HD 59



Rep. David Sampson
HD 153



Rep. Long Tran
HD 80



Rep. Anne Allen Westbrook
HD 163

Save The Date Templates



FREEDOM TO BE HEARD

FIELD HEARING

[DATE]
[TIME]
[LOCATION NAME]
[ADDRESS]

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a centuries-old movement dedicated to upholding the freedom for all Americans to access life, liberty and happiness. Join [HOSTING GROUP] to broaden the general public's knowledge about DEI, and hear more about its impact on a broad range of issues, industries, and people across the state.

Click here to sign up to attend or testify [INSERT LINK TO RSVP FORM]

[INSERT LOGO OR MORE INFO ABOUT
HOSTING GROUP/LEG PANEL]

You can access the
editable template
[here](#)

FREEDOM TO BE HEARD HEARING



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) IS A CENTURIES-OLD MOVEMENT DEDICATED TO UPHOLDING THE FREEDOM FOR ALL AMERICANS TO ACCESS LIFE, LIBERTY AND HAPPINESS. JOIN [HOSTING GROUP] TO BROADEN THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S KNOWLEDGE ABOUT DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION, AND HEAR MORE ABOUT ITS IMPACT ON A BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES, INDUSTRIES, AND PEOPLE ACROSS THE STATE.

[DATE]

[TIME]

REGISTER NOW:
[RSBP FORM LINK]

 [LOCATION AND ADDRESS]

HOSTED BY [HOSTING
GROUP OR PANEL
CHAIR] OR [HOSTING
GROUP LOGO]

You can access the
editable template
[here](#)

Social Media Toolkit

Tips

- ❖ To maximize the reach of social media, organizers and attendees of the Freedom to Be Heard Field Hearing should post before and after the event across multiple platforms.
- ❖ Leverage [#FreedomToBeHeard](#) so your field hearing's posts join a community of DEI champions across the US lifting up stories of community leaders fighting to defend and expand diversity, equity, and inclusion to deliver the American dream.
- ❖ The following templates and content can be used for Instagram, X, Facebook, Bluesky, TikTok and LinkedIn posts.

Social Media Graphics

- Utilize the [social media graphics templates provided in this toolkit](#) to edit and fill out the graphic with the relevant field hearing information.
- If the legislative panel has a logo, feel free to include that as well.
- Include the following text depending on the legislative landscape of your state:
 - Legislative efforts to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion are harming [STATE's] families and communities. We're speaking out to protect access to the American Dream for **all**.
 - [PEOPLE FROM STATE] speak out against legislative attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and demand our lawmakers focus on addressing the real challenges our communities face.
 - Diversity, equity, and inclusion are core American values that ensure everyone has fair access to opportunity and a chance to achieve their American Dream. We are speaking out in support of DEI and against national attacks on this core American value.
 - Diversity, equity, and inclusion has opened the doors of opportunity for generations of Americans of all backgrounds. We are speaking out in support of this core American value.
 - A diverse, equitable and inclusive America represents our nation at its best and ensures that every American has the opportunity to live a fulfilling life. We are speaking out/sharing our stories to make sure our policies reflect this and ensure equal and equitable opportunities for all.

Social Media Graphics Examples



ATLANTA FREEDOM TO BE HEARD HEARING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14 | 6PM

National Center for Civil & Human Rights

Legislative efforts to dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion are harming Georgia's families and communities. We're speaking out to protect access to the American Dream for **all**.

**GEORGIA FREEDOM
TO BE HEARD**
COMMITTEE



FREEDOM TO BE HEARD HEARING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14 | 6PM

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Legislative efforts to dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion are harming Georgia's families and communities. We're speaking out to protect access to the American Dream for **all**.

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TO BE HEARD**
COMMITTEE

ATLANTA FREEDOM TO BE HEARD HEARING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14 | 6PM

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TO BE HEARD**
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FREEDOM TO BE HEARD HEARING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14 | 6PM

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Legislative efforts to dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion are harming Georgia's families and communities. We're speaking out to protect access to the American Dream for all.

**GEORGIA FREEDOM
TO BE HEARD**
COMMITTEE



Social Media Graphics Templates



You can access the
editable template
[here](#)

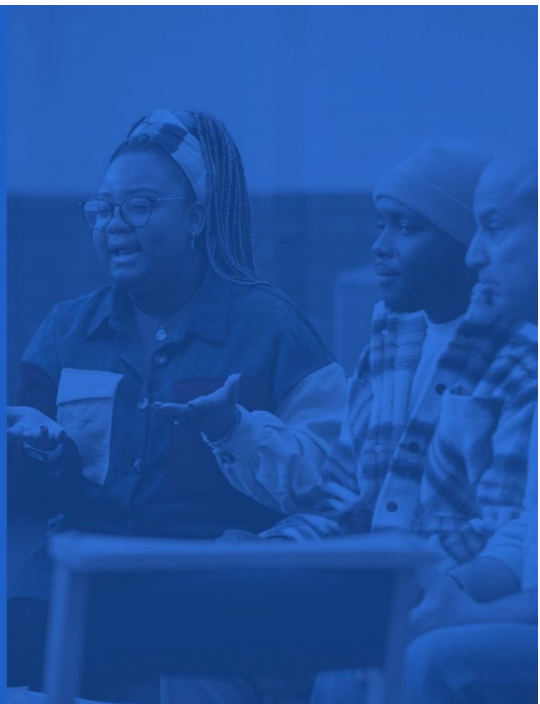


You can access the
editable template
[here](#)

[CITY] FREEDOM TO BE HEARD HEARING

[DAY OF THE WEEK], [DATE] |
[TIME]
[LOCATION]

EXAMPLE TEXT: Legislative efforts to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion are harming Georgia's families and communities. We're speaking out to protect access to the American Dream for all.



You can access the
editable template [here](#)

FREEDOM TO BE HEARD HEARING

[DAY OF THE WEEK], [DATE] |
[TIME]
[LOCATION]


EXAMPLE TEXT: Legislative efforts to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion are harming Georgia's families and communities. We're speaking out to protect access to the American Dream for all.



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Pre-Hearing Content

Social Copy

 Policies that promote access to opportunity for people of ALL identities make [STATE] strong! 🌟 We're joining leaders and advocates in [CITY] at the #FreedomToBeHeard field hearing to demand lawmakers preserve America's greatest strength – our diversity.



Throughout history, Americans have fought for equitable access to opportunity for all. But today, certain lawmakers are working to restore barriers to the American Dream. We refuse to let them succeed, so we're in [CITY] to ensure all voices have the #FreedomToBeHeard!

Our communities' voices will be heard this [DAY OF THE WEEK] in [CITY]! We're standing up and speaking out to protect all [PEOPLE FROM STATE'S] access to their American Dream. Join us: [RSVP FORM, PROMOTIONAL GRAPHIC] #FreedomToBeHeard

While some lawmakers use their time and resources to fuel attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion, we use ours to address the real issues [PEOPLE FROM STATE] face. Join us at a #FreedomToBeHeard field hearing this week and make your voice heard by signing up [using this link **OR** visiting the link in our bio].

Post-Field Hearing Content

Social Copy



 Policies that promote access to opportunity for people of ALL identities make [STATE] strong!  We joined leaders and advocates in [CITY] at the #FreedomToBeHeard field hearing to demand lawmakers preserve America's greatest strength – our diversity.

This week, [PEOPLE FROM STATE] spoke out at a field hearing to advocate for the issues that are most important to our communities, urging lawmakers to focus on challenges like [ISSUES/THEMES FROM FIELD HEARING] instead of attacking diversity, equity, and inclusion. #FreedomToBeHeard

This week, [PEOPLE FROM STATE] spoke out at a local hearing to advocate for the real issues our communities face. We all have the #FreedomToBeHeard! Together, we can use our voices to fight for a more diverse, equitable and just democracy.

Evergreen Content

Social Copy

 History has shown us that our nation makes incredible progress when ALL Americans have the **#FreedomToBeHeard!** We must continue to fight for policies that ensure ALL communities, not just a select few, have access to the American Dream. 

Throughout our history, [STATE] elected officials, business leaders, and community advocates have fought to ensure our state is a place where everyone can thrive. Opponents of diversity, equity, and inclusion seek to return us to a more divided past by attacking access to opportunity for all. We won't let that happen.

Messaging and Talking Points

The core audience for these are legislators, so that you can use these to affirm a common narrative and to shape responses to the testimony during the hearing.

What is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)?

- ❖ Diversity, equity and inclusion are core American values that ensure everyone has fair access to opportunity and a chance to achieve their American Dream. America was founded on the idea that everyone should have a fair chance at success, whatever that looks like for each of us. Without diversity, equity, and inclusion, our workplaces and schools see diminished innovation, creativity and problem solving; our economy sees weaker financial output and global competitiveness; and our society faces increased polarization and fragmentation.
 - This movement is not new. It is made up of critical moments in our nation's history that have pushed our nation forward and ensured equitable opportunity for all – such as the movements for civil rights, gender equality, and labor rights.
 - The goal of DEI is to ensure that EVERY American can access pathways to the American Dream – free of historic, systemic and institutional barriers that have left too many communities behind.
 - A diverse, equitable and inclusive America represents our nation at its best and ensures that every American has the opportunity to live a fulfilling life.
 - DEI is not about giving special privileges to some, it's about creating equitable opportunity for ALL.

What's at stake in the war against Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?

- ❖ Diversity, equity, and inclusion has opened the doors of opportunity for generations of Americans of all backgrounds. Opponents of diversity, equity, and inclusion want to close these doors once again and erect barriers to equal opportunity and the American Dream.
 - Every American deserves the freedom and opportunity to provide, support and care for their loved ones.
 - Opponents of diversity, equity, and inclusion are attacking the American Dream and restricting pathways to success for all Americans in an attempt to establish a narrow and exclusionary vision of our nation.
 - Those who seek to dismantle DEI understand its value and know that it works – and that's why they are determined to end it.

What's driving attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and what do they intend to accomplish?

- ❖ Since 2024, over 325 anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion bills were introduced or passed across 35+ states as reactionary, politically-motivated groups attempt to undo generations of progress that ensures every American has the freedom and opportunity to achieve the American Dream. As of May 2025 alone, over 205 have been introduced. Rollbacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives have rippling effects and touch all of us. These rollbacks could mean:
 - **Young people** are prevented from reading classic texts and books from diverse authors and voices that offer new perspectives.
 - **Teachers and school administrators may self-censor** due to confusion or fear of teaching on certain topics and students lose crucial learning
 - **A low-income or first-generation college student** will not have access to the programs that would help them attend and succeed in school.
 - **Legislators and lawyers may feel less empowered OR more empowered** to pass or argue for laws that will disproportionately hurt communities of color.
 - **Medical schools** will not be able to educate future healthcare workers on methods to address health disparities that are prevalent in particular communities, which leads to unequal and dangerous health outcomes for patients.
 - **An aspiring small business owner** cannot access the funding needed to launch their business.
 - **Businesses** may halt efforts to attract and retain strong, diverse talent and lose good talent who may not feel “seen” or “supported” in their role.
 - **People (in general)** may be less willing or afraid to engage or talk with others about our differences and similarities in an effort to gain greater understanding.

Who benefits from DEI?

- ❖ We all benefit when our society embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion. DEI strengthens our nation by removing barriers to the American Dream.
 - Diversity, equity, and inclusion ensures everyone can access equitable opportunities, strengthens our economy, and allows us to remain competitive on the global stage.
 - Those fighting for diversity, equity, and inclusion are continuing the fight to ensure that our nation lives up to its highest ideals.
 - If we lose DEI, we undermine the promise of America and our winning edge as a nation – diversity is our strength.

Talking Points By Issue Area/Affected Populations

For business-related testimonies:

- ❖ Thank you for highlighting how these proposed laws will impact our businesses and local economy. Despite what proponents of these laws say, they are anti-business and will make our businesses less competitive.
- ❖ We know that these short-sighted efforts will make it harder for our businesses to attract and retain strong, diverse talent and compel talent who may not feel “seen” or “supported” in their roles to leave.
- ❖ We also know that this could mean that an aspiring small business owner cannot access the funding needed to launch their business.

For education-related testimonies:

- ❖ Thank you for your testimony. It is our students who are most harmed by these anti-DEI efforts and the consequences can have a long-term effect on their careers and livelihoods.
- ❖ We know that without diversity, equity, and inclusion, our schools see diminished innovation, creativity and problem solving, and our students miss out on receiving the best education they can.

For healthcare-related testimonies:

- ❖ Thank you for sharing this and explaining more about the horrifying implications these policies can have on the health of our community members, driving dangerous health outcomes for patients. These laws may make it harder for all of us, especially those of us with long-standing health issues.

For advocacy-related testimonies:

- ❖ Thank you for your testimony. This is not a moment to retreat – anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion groups are counting on us not to fight back.
- ❖ This is truly an example of what diversity, equity, and inclusion should look like especially in the current climate.
- ❖ We are unfortunately in a moment where legislators and lawyers may feel more empowered to pass or argue for laws that will disproportionately hurt communities of color. We cannot let them win for we all suffer, across race, gender, and age, if they do.

For questions or strategic guidance,
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