

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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Bill No: SCR 89  
Author: Smallwood-Cuevas (D), et al.  
Amended: 3/20/26  
Vote: 21

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SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: 11-1, 7/8/25

AYES: Umberg, Allen, Arreguín, Ashby, Caballero, Durazo, Laird, Stern, Wahab,  
Weber Pierson, Wiener

NOES: Niello

NO VOTE RECORDED: Valladares

SENATE FLOOR: 29-7, 2/19/26

AYES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon,  
Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird,  
Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio,  
Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

NOES: Alvarado-Gil, Dahle, Jones, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Seyarto, Strickland

NO VOTE RECORDED: Choi, Grove, Reyes, Valladares

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: Adopted via voice vote, 6/15/26

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**SUBJECT:** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

**SOURCE:** Author

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**DIGEST:** This resolution affirms the Legislature's commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles at a time when DEI efforts and programs are under attack.

*Assembly Amendments* added co-authors.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

- 1) Provides that no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. (United States Constitution (U.S. Const.), 14th Amend., § 1.)
- 2) Provides that a person may not be denied the equal protection of the laws, and that a citizen or class of citizens may not be granted privileges or immunities not granted on the same terms to all citizens. (California Constitution (Cal. Const.), art. I, § 7.)
- 3) Provides that Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech. (U.S. Const., 1st amend.)

This resolution:

- 1) Declares that:
  - a) The American Dream has been a beacon of hope for generations.
  - b) The American Dream embodies the ideals of opportunity, prosperity, and upward mobility, promising that every person should have the chance to achieve what they themselves define as success and fulfillment through hard work and determination.
  - c) Many today feel that their American Dream is unattainable.
  - d) The American Dream belongs to all of us.
  - e) Our highest accomplishments as a state and nation have been achieved when we harness the strengths of all people regardless of their identities to overcome our greatest challenges.
  - f) DEI is a centuries-old movement deeply rooted in America's founding principles and its subsequent legacy of civil rights and social justice efforts aimed at delivering the laws, policies, and initiatives that enable America to live up to our Constitution's promises.
  - g) DEI policies, from the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, among others, reflect the corrective legislative and legal actions taken across our nation's history to expand and guarantee access to the educational, economic, and civic obligations and capacities of our nation.

- h) California has been a leader in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within the California state service to achieve equitable work cultures.
- i) Governor Newsom signed an executive order directing state agencies and departments to take additional actions to embed equity analysis and considerations in their mission, policies, and practices and establishing the Racial Equity Commission.
- j) The California State Assembly passed a resolution to require the Assembly to explore methods to integrate equity more formally into its daily activities, including the potential adoption of an equity impact analysis into the existing committee and floor bill analysis process.
- k) DEI principles and policies promote equal access to opportunities, foster an environment of respect and belonging, and ensure that every individual—regardless of background—can fully participate in all aspects of society.
- l) DEI policies are intended not only to promote access, but to proactively dismantle systematic inequalities in education, employment, housing, health care, and civic participation that have disproportionately impacted communities of color, indigenous peoples, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, individuals with disabilities, and other historically excluded groups.
- m) DEI initiatives often include targeted recruitment, culturally competent workplace training, equity-focused budgeting, inclusive curriculum development, and disaggregated data reporting to address measurable disparities in outcomes.
- n) DEI is essential to creating a society where all individuals are valued, heard, and included.
- o) DEI is based on removing barriers to opportunity so our merits can speak for themselves.
- p) DEI is committed to widening pathways to the American Dream for every community so that all people can reap the benefits of shared prosperity in our nation.
- q) Freedom of speech and expression are fundamental constitutional rights, protecting the ability of individuals to voice their ideas and opinions without interference, punishment, or retaliation by the government.

- r) Retaliatory actions such as terminating, silencing, or marginalizing qualified public servants, educators, and professionals based on their advocacy for equity or their identities—including race, gender, or LGBTQ+ status—represent a dangerous erosion of civil liberties and a threat to representative leadership in public life.
  - s) Attempts to prohibit DEI practices diminish the diversity of perspectives that strengthen our society, and conflict with antidiscrimination laws.
  - t) The federal government under the Trump Administration and ongoing political actors have sought to dismantle DEI frameworks, including banning DEI training in federal agencies, attempting to eliminate race-conscious admissions policies, and threatening funding for universities that incorporate equity-related content.
  - u) These efforts not only undermine civil rights progress but contradict core democratic values enshrined in the United States Constitution and upheld through decades of precedent, such as *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.*
  - v) Efforts to attack DEI are harmful to our country.
- 2) Resolves, by the Senate of the State of California and with the Assembly concurring:
- a) The Legislature affirms its commitment to DEI as an essential foundation for achieving the American Dream and fostering environments where all individuals have the freedom to be healthy, prosperous, and safe and have the opportunity to realize their full potential.
  - b) The Legislature encourages local, state, and federal policymakers, educational institutions, workplaces, and other organizations to adopt and uphold DEI principles that promote inclusivity, protect freedom of expression, remove barriers, and provide equitable opportunities for all individuals to pursue their dreams.
  - c) The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

## Comments

In the face of ongoing attacks on DEI and the dismantling of DEI programs, this resolution reaffirms the Legislature's commitment to DEI as a necessary

foundation for ensuring that all persons have the opportunity to realize their full potential. This resolution recites the history and purpose of DEI and California's leading role in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within state government and across the state. This resolution also recognizes that attempts to prohibit DEI practices and programs diminish the diversity of perspectives, which weakens, rather than strengthens, our society. This resolution states that these anti-DEI efforts are harmful to our country. Finally, this resolution states that the Legislature encourages local, state, and federal policymakers, educational institutions, workplaces, and other institutions to adopt and uphold DEI principles that promote inclusivity, protect freedom of expression, remove barriers, and provide equitable opportunities for all individuals to pursue their dreams.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: No Local: No

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 6/17/26)

CleanEarth4Kids.org

University of California Student Association

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 6/17/26)

None received

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** According to the University of California Student Association, "Across the University of California, and higher education institutions across the state and country, the federal administration has perpetuated hostile attacks against DEI initiatives that support students from all backgrounds<sup>1</sup> with access to a postsecondary degree, by arbitrarily withholding essential research dollars to world class institutions studying cures and treatments for cancer, diabetes, heart disease, organ transplants and so much more. The \$500 Million research cuts and \$1 Billion ransom against UCLA in August 2025<sup>2</sup> threatened the sanctity and success of our students, faculty, Medical Center and UC system to continue being the world class research enterprise that has championed breakthroughs in science. Scaling back of diversity program staff, equity centers and inclusivity measures across the UC that benefit ALL students while closing gaps in college access and degree attainment is dangerous to current and future students, and UCSA thanks the Senator for standing up."

Prepared by: Allison Whitt Meredith / JUD. / (916) 651-4113  
6/17/26 16:28:22

\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\*