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PRESS STATEMENT | May 20, 2023

NAACP Issues Travel Advisory in Florida



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON – Today, the NAACP Board of Directors issued a formal travel advisory for the state of Florida. The travel advisory comes in direct response to Governor Ron DeSantis’ aggressive attempts to erase Black history and to restrict diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in Florida schools.

The formal travel notice states, “Florida is openly hostile toward African Americans, people of color and LGBTQ+ individuals. Before traveling to Florida, please understand that the state of Florida devalues and marginalizes the contributions of, and the challenges faced by African Americans and other communities of color.”

“Let me be clear - failing to teach an accurate representation of the horrors and inequalities that Black Americans have faced and continue to face is a disservice to students and a dereliction of duty to all,” **said NAACP President & CEO Derrick Johnson.** “Under the leadership of Governor Desantis, the state of Florida has become hostile to Black Americans and in direct conflict with the democratic ideals that our union was founded upon. He should know that democracy will prevail because its defenders are prepared to stand up and fight. We’re not backing down, and we encourage our allies to join us in the battle for the soul of our nation.”

The travel advisory was initially proposed to the Board of Directors by NAACP’s Florida State Conference. NAACP’s collective consideration of this advisory is a result from unrelenting attacks on fundamental freedoms from the Governor and his legislative body.

“Once again, hate-inspired state leaders have chosen to put politics over people. Governor Ron DeSantis and the state of Florida have engaged in a blatant war against principles of diversity and inclusion and rejected our shared identities to appeal to a dangerous, extremist minority,” **said Chair of the NAACP Board of Directors, Leon Russell.** “We will not allow our rights and

history to be held hostage for political grandstanding. The NAACP proudly fights against the malicious attacks in Florida, against Black Americans. I encourage my fellow Floridians to join in this fight to protect ourselves and our democracy.”

Following Gov. DeSantis’ so-called leadership in driving the state to reject students’ access to AP African American studies course in March, the NAACP distributed 10,000 books to 25 predominantly Black communities across the state in collaboration with the American Federation of Teachers’s Reading Opens the World program. The majority of the books donated were titles banned under the state’s increasingly restrictive laws. The NAACP continues to encourage local branches and youth councils to start community libraries to ensure access to representative literature.

The NAACP encourages Florida residents to join this effort to defeat the regressive policies of this Governor and this state legislature. Interested residents and supporters can visit www.naacp.org for additional information and updates.

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About NAACP

The NAACP advocates, agitates, and litigates for the civil rights due to Black America. Our legacy is built on the foundation of grassroots activism by the biggest civil rights pioneers of the 20th century and is sustained by 21st century activists. From classrooms and courtrooms to city halls and Congress, our network of members across the country works to secure the social and political power that will end race-based discrimination. That work is rooted in racial equity, civic engagement, and supportive policies and institutions for all marginalized people. We are committed to a world without racism where Black people enjoy equitable opportunities in thriving communities.

NOTE: The Legal Defense Fund – also referred to as the NAACP-LDF - was founded in 1940 as a part of the NAACP, but now operates as a completely separate entity.

Learn more about why Florida is deemed harmful for Black Americans.

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