



DEI ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

Jan 24, 2025 | *Stephanie Mittica*

“We will forge a society that is colorblind and merit-based.” – President Trump, January 20, 2025. Consistent with President Trump’s words during his inauguration address, he has already begun efforts to roll-back diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in the federal government. On his first day in Office, President Trump signed an executive order that includes a broad dismantling of the federal government’s DEI programs. He also signed an executive order recognizing only two sexes – male and female – and directing federal agencies to cease the promotion of the concept of gender transition. Additionally, President Trump signed another executive order further expanding his directive on banning DEI and encouraging the private sector to follow the federal government’s lead in eradicating “illegal” DEI discrimination and preferences. Significantly, the executive order revokes a prior executive order and directs the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs to stop promoting diversity and affirmative action. This directly impacts companies who were previously required to develop affirmative action programs amongst other efforts.

Notably, these executive orders do not directly impact the anti-discrimination protections afforded to employees under both Title VII and Ohio Revised Code § 4112, as interpreted by the courts, including protections based on gender identity and sexual orientation. However, President Trump has asked the attorney general to review these issues and create a plan to deter the private sector from adopting or continuing DEI programs.

If you have any questions, please contact any of the listed Roetzel attorneys.

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