

NAACP OPPOSITION TO THE NOMINATION OF TODD BLANCHE FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL

A COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

July 14, 2026

The NAACP, our nation's largest and most widely recognized civil rights organization and whose mission, among other things, includes seeking enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights, opposes the nomination of Todd Blanche to serve as the U.S. Attorney General.

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Department of Justice is to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights. Todd Blanche has failed to uphold this responsibility both as Deputy Attorney General and now as Acting Attorney General. He has wielded the tremendous power of the Office of the Attorney General in ways that subvert the fair and impartial administration of justice and endanger the constitutional and civil rights of all Americans. Further, he has endangered Black people and communities of color by administering justice in ways that exclude them from the promise of equal justice under law. Todd Blanche has transformed our nation's highest law enforcement agency into little more than a tool to carry out the personal and political bidding of President Trump. On his watch, the Justice Department has eviscerated decades of progress in the civil rights sphere, weaponized voting rights laws to take actions that are harmful to democracy, turned a blind eye to police misconduct and hate crimes to the peril of vulnerable communities, ignored gross violations of law at the hands of ICE, and fully abandoned the business of enforcing our federal civil rights laws. He has used the agency to target and exploit vulnerable communities, investigate civil rights organizations, and pursued baseless prosecutions of public officials, including New York State Attorney General Letitia James[1] and U.S. Representative LaMonica McIver[2]; and members of the press including Georgia Fort and Don Lemon.[3] Some 16,000 employees have been fired or otherwise departed the Justice Department on his watch.[4]

On his watch, this Justice Department has collided with the courts and demonstrated a gluttonous level of contempt for the rule of law. Blanche fired a senior attorney after he refused to comply with his order to file a brief misrepresenting facts,[5] described the Trump Administration as being at "war" with the federal judiciary, and invited young lawyers to "join the fight" against purported "activist judges." [6]



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On July 12, in *Trump vs. IRS*, a federal judge described the Justice Department as “manipulating the judicial process” in a case that sought to confer immunity to President Trump and his two oldest sons from any future IRS audits while directing the transfer of \$1.8 billion in taxpayer funds to Trump to create a slush fund that would have benefitted January 6th insurrectionists.[7] The judge directed that a copy of her order be sent to the State Bar of New York where Blanche is a member. This striking development should sound an alarm about his ability to fairly and professionally lead our nation’s highest law enforcement agency.

The NAACP is deeply concerned that as Attorney General, Todd Blanche would continue to erode civil rights through an abuse of power that would directly impact our lives, our families, and our communities for generations to come. We stand opposed to, and urge you to reject, his nomination to serve as Attorney General.

Failing to Hold Law Enforcement Accountable at the Expense of Black Lives

Despite the oath he took to “support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States,” we have seen Todd Blanche fully retreat from investigating and prosecuting law enforcement officers who violate people’s civil and constitutional rights. Section 242 of Title 18 of the federal code makes it a federal crime for a law enforcement official to willfully deprive a person of their constitutional rights[8] – a federal law that has been largely ignored under Blanche’s leadership.

There are countless examples of the critical need for Section 242 enforcement from the past 30 days alone, yet the silence from the Justice Department has been deafening. Local and state law enforcement, and overfunded, untrained and masked ICE agents are killing people with impunity. On June 29, 2026, Darius Chappell, a Black man, was tased multiple times and bitten by a K-9 for nearly one minute during an arrest.[9] Four days later, he was found unresponsive in his cell and then pronounced dead.[10] On July 5, 2026, two Tennessee National Guard members fatally shot Tyrin Johnson, a young Black man, while they were in pursuit.[11] While the National Guard members allege that Johnson turned towards them with a gun, video footage has not yet been released to corroborate their story.[12] On July 7, 2026, ICE agents shot and killed Lorenzo Salgado Araujo, a three-decade resident of Houston, a father, a husband, and a Mexican immigrant. On July 12, 2026, an ICE agent shot a 26-year-old father, Joan Sebastian Guerrero, in Biddeford, Maine, a killing witnessed by his three year old daughter and partner.[13]

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The Justice Department has the authority and capacity to investigate these acts of law enforcement misconduct, the loss of life, and brazen violence but chosen not to on Blanche's watch. Blanche has stated he is "making law enforcement a good thing to be a part of now." [14] However, through his actions, he has made communities more vulnerable to police violence. At the direction of Blanche, the Justice Department rescinded restrictions on use of no-knock warrants, a reform put in place following the tragic killing of Breonna Taylor. [15] On June 9, 2026, the DOJ announced the release of \$700 million in grants to support law enforcement through various programs. The STOP School Violence Prevention Program allows funding to be used to ramp up security at schools and on school grounds in ways that may exacerbate the school-to-prison pipeline. [16]

Under Blanche's leadership, this Justice Department has repeatedly sought to overturn cases in which a law enforcement officer was found guilty of excessive force. In March 2026, the Civil Rights Division filed a motion to dismiss the remaining charges against former Detective Joshua Jaynes and Sergeant Kyle Meany who were involved in the killing of Breonna Taylor. This follows their withdrawal of the consent decree and investigative findings of both routine excessive force and other systemic violations at the Louisville Metro Police Department. That same month, the Civil Rights Division filed a brief in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals arguing for the dismissal of a case against former deputy Trevor Kirk for using excessive force when he threw a woman to the ground and pepper sprayed her in the face, despite a jury finding Kirk guilty of a felony. [17]

Moreover, instead of protecting communities from systemic violations, the DOJ is now using 34 U.S.C §12601—a statute enacted in 1994 following the beating of Rodney King to address systemic violations inside law enforcement agencies—to now facilitate access to guns. Congressional reports tied to the original version of this pattern-or-practice statute referenced the need to curb racial bias and physical abuse by officers as the provision's main impetus. [18] Specifically, the Department has opened investigations into jurisdictions such as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Los Angeles County, Denver, Colorado and Washington, D.C. where the Department alleges that these jurisdictions are impeding access to guns in violation of the Second Amendment. These are not the kind of pattern or practice investigations that Congress intended. Instead, the Justice Department is weaponizing the statute to challenge jurisdictions for imposing common sense restrictions on gun access and permit requirements, actions that barely implicate the conduct of law enforcement officers. As such, Blanche's actions at the DOJ endanger the lives of Black people and other people of color.



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In the past, the Federal government has recognized that even the appearance of bias in law enforcement practices engenders mistrust. The “Guidance to Federal Law Enforcement” states, “Law enforcement practices free from inappropriate considerations, by contrast, strengthen trust in law enforcement agencies and foster collaborative efforts between law enforcement and communities to fight crime and keep the Nation safe.”[19] By failing to employ the tools created by Congress to ensure lawful and legitimate policing practices, Todd Blanche has undermined the Department of Justice’s ability to ensure public safety and enable law enforcement agencies to perform their core functions.

Weaponizing Voting Rights Laws and Targeting Voters

On Blanche’s watch, we have seen the Justice Department abandon enforcement of voting rights laws. On Blanche’s watch, the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice has demanded complete voter registration lists from 48 states and Washington, D.C. and sued those who have not complied.[20] The DOJ has brought lawsuits against D.C. and 30 states who have refused to provide the information. The NAACP has intervened through litigation to resist these efforts in close to a dozen states. Every single one of these lawsuits has failed. Specifically, eleven cases have been dismissed; the DOJ has appealed those rulings.[21] Sixteen states have complied with the request.[22] For those states that are acting in complicity with the Department’s objectives, the Department has required that states sign a confidential Memorandum of Understanding that promotes the administration’s narrative – that these lists are being used to verify that “ineligible voters do not appear on a state’s [Voter Registration List or VRL].”[23] The reasoning appears to be, at least partially, pretextual (they are also targeting Sanctuary Cities and have explicitly stated they are running the voting data against DHS’s databases) based on the counties they are aggressively targeting for VRL information, voting equipment, and physical ballots.

The DOJ is citing the Civil Rights Act of 1960 as providing a legal basis for their attempt to compel disclosure of voter registration lists. A provision of this law provides federal officials authority to review voter rolls, applications, and election records.[24] However, the purpose of this Act was to counter “widespread resistance against civil rights enforcement, particularly in Southern States.”[25] Ultimately, the DOJ is using a civil rights law, the original purpose of which was to create a “mechanism for intervention”[26] when local government took action to disenfranchise minority, and especially Black, voters, and are manipulating it to now use it as a tool to disenfranchise those same voting populations the Act was meant to protect.



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Under Blanche, we have seen the Justice Department unleash chaos and havoc in our electoral process. The DOJ has sought voter equipment, voter registration information, and information about local voter-registration organizations from numerous jurisdictions with large Black populations including, but not limited to, Franklin County, Ohio (county ranks 3rd statewide out of 88 counties in total number of Black residents[27]; approximately 25% Black residents), Montgomery County, Ohio (approximately 20.4% Black residents[28]), and Fulton County, Georgia (approximately 42.1% Black residents[29]).[30] The DOJ has targeted Fulton County aggressively by (1) filing a grand jury subpoena requesting the names and personal contact information of county employees and volunteer poll workers in the county[31]; (2) initiating a criminal investigation against the county focusing on whether “intentional acts” led to ballot count discrepancies in the 2020 election[32]; and (3) authorizing the Fulton County election raid in which they seized more than 650 boxes with original physical ballots, digital images, and voting machine records.[33] These actions harm NAACP members and breed distrust in our democratic process.

After losing every lawsuit to date in which it has sought access to voter registration lists, the Justice Department has now resorted to more heavy-handed tactics. Earlier this month, the Justice Department issued letters to state officials declaring that criminal charges will be brought against officials if there are instances of noncitizens voting in their elections.[34] The letters further required a response in five days explaining how states will “comply with voter eligibility laws” and “maintain ‘clean voter rolls.’”[35] The aggressive nature of their tactics tarnish and bring ill repute to our nation’s highest law enforcement agency.

We want to be very clear about the goals underlying these tactics – despite the lies being used to sell them to the American public. Every era of Black disenfranchisement has dressed itself in the language of administrative necessity – election integrity, fraud prevention, eligibility verification. What is different today is the source. This is a Justice Department that is weaponizing the massive powers of agency to dictate which voters participate in American elections. It is also a blatantly unconstitutional seizure of authority that the Constitution assigns to Congress and the states. The Department, without evidence, claims these actions are necessary in order to combat “widespread voter fraud.” But the data tell a different story. Our colleagues at the Brennan Center recently found “incident rates between 0.0003 percent and 0.0025 percent” indicating “it’s more likely that an American will be struck by lightning than s/he will impersonate another person at the polls.”[36]



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Under Blanche, the Justice Department has ended coordination that has been in place for decades – a rapid response team of prosecutors, FBI agents, and police departments – that worked together to address severe election day problems such as bomb threats, website hackings, power grid failures, and other potential criminal acts. A Justice Department under Todd Blanche would continue to take actions that pose a threat to democracy.

Promoting Hostility to Diversity and Fairness Through the “Civil Rights Fraud Initiative”

On May 19, 2025, Blanche announced the creation of the Civil Rights Fraud Initiative, an office whose work turns largely on unprecedented use of the False Claims Act (FCA), 31 U.S.C § 3729-3773.[37] The FCA was initially enacted in 1863 during the Civil War in response to Union Army suppliers defrauding the Army.[38] Historically, liability under the False Claims Act arises when a recipient of federal funds knowingly submits a false claim to the government or makes a false record or statement to get a false claim paid by the government.[39] The law has allowed private parties and the government to use the law to address fraud in government contracts.[40]

This Initiative has involved wholesale weaponization of the False Claims Act to position the Justice Department to be able to pursue dubious fraud claims against colleges and universities, corporations, federal contractors, and recipients of federal funding. The purpose: a pressure campaign intended to force these entities to abandon lawful and necessary programs that promote fairness, diversity, and accessibility. On Blanche's watch, the Justice Department has targeted recipients of federal funds by alleging that their certification of compliance with federal law violates this administration's political stance and hostility to “DEI” policies and efforts. They have pursued entities that have certified compliance with civil rights law by alleging that they are “engaging in racist preferences, mandates, policies, programs, and activities, including through diversity, equity, and inclusion programs that assign benefits or burdens on race, ethnicity, or national origin.”[41] This Initiative collides with the original goal and purpose underlying the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and targets recipients of federal funding who are doing work in line with the Act's purpose of creating equal opportunities for all Americans.

The Department's first settlement under the Civil Rights Fraud Initiative was against International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) which agreed to pay \$17,077,043 to settle a case alleging that the company violated...



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...the False Claims Act by maintaining policies focused on promoting equity in the workplace.[42] The DOJ alleged that IBM employed a “diversity modifier” that “tied bonus compensation to achieving demographic targets” and diverse sourcing employment practices among other claims.[43] The terms of the agreement make clear that IBM denied engaging in unlawful conduct.[44] The Initiative has created chaos and confusion in many sectors and is emblematic of Blanche’s approach to civil rights – abusing the levers of government to commandeer actions fully antithetical to the goals underlying civil rights laws passed by Congress.[45]

Failing to Confront Hate Crimes, Targeting Civil Rights Groups Focused on Ending Hate Crimes, and Pardoning People with Ties to Hate Organizations

As the nation marked 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Patriot Front – one of the most visible white supremacist and neo-fascist hate groups – marched freely through the Nation’s Capital.[46] Despite the residing tide of hate-motivated violence, we see a Justice Department that is failing to vigorously investigate and prosecute hate crimes pursuant to its authority under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act[47] and other federal hate crime laws.

The DOJ’s failure to investigate a wide array of racially-motivated hate crimes is not justified by an argument that the crimes are not occurring. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released the 2024 hate crimes data from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, which reflects data reported by law enforcement agencies nationwide. The statistics show that the number of known offenders reported has risen from 9,739 in 2023 to 10,096 in 2024.[48] Current statistics make clear that Black, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and LGBTQ+ Americans continue to be among the most targeted groups. Furthermore, race, ethnicity, or ancestry accounted for approximately 53.4% of the bias-motivation for hate crimes from February 2024 to May 2026.[49] Sexual orientation accounted for 15.84% of bias-motivation, and religion accounted for 23.62%.[50]

Targeting Civil Rights Organizations

The flawed indictment of Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), an organization dedicated to combatting racially motivated violence, indicates that the DOJ is diverting resources and targeting civil rights organizations rather than confronting hate crime violence itself. The targeting of SPLC is a distraction meant to turn attention away from the DOJ’s failure to vigorously prosecute hate violence in the United States.

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In the indictment, SPLC is charged with inciting the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia that brought together droves of violent white supremacists.[51]

The entire indictment rests on the premise that because the SPLC utilized paid informants to infiltrate white supremacist organizations, the SPLC must have been, itself, manufacturing the hate and violence it seeks to eradicate.[52] What the indictment fails to state is that the SPLC’s informant provided vital information to three FBI offices about the ensuing violence.[53] As a member of Congress recently observed, the FBI is not deemed to support the mafia when it sends undercover agents into drug trafficking rings.[54] The SPLC is an organization that has been firebombed and, even in the face of violence, has maintained a long commitment to supporting law enforcement and communities in the fight against hate violence. The attack on the SPLC exemplifies the kind of flawed, biased, and inappropriate law enforcement work we can expect if Blanche is confirmed.

Pardoning Members of Groups with White Supremacist Ties

Blanche supported pardons for large amounts of January 6 insurrectionists, some of whom are known members of groups with white supremacist ties. He filed motions to vacate the seditious conspiracy charges for several January 6 defendants, including Stewart Rhodes (founder of Oath Keepers) and Enrique Tarrio (leader of the Proud Boys), as well as other members of the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys.[55] Outside of the January 6 insurrection, many of these same individuals have promoted violence against Black people and other people of color. Following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, the Proud Boys led efforts to attack and intimidate Black Lives Matter protestors, particularly in the Pacific Northwest.[56] Especially since 2016, the Oath Keepers have directed their animus toward immigrants, Muslims, the Black Lives Matter movement, and others they perceive as hostile.[57] Pardoning members from these groups serves as a green light for the hate they spew.

Abandoning Fair Enforcement of Civil Rights Laws

Ending Title VI Enforcement

Under Blanche’s leadership as Deputy Attorney General in 2025, the DOJ reported that it would no longer investigate Title VI disparate-impact claims or bring enforcement actions based on disparate-impact.[58]



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The DOJ issued a Final Rule updating its regulations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities that receive federal funding.[59]

The rule now requires proof of intent as the sole basis for discrimination claims, eliminating the use of statistical disparities under disparate-impact theory.[60] By issuing the Rule, the DOJ has removed disparate-impact liability from its Title VI regulations, ending a 50-year practice that allowed civil rights agencies and courts to find actionable discrimination without evidence of explicit intent.[61] The DOJ now claims that disparate-impact liability was never contemplated, let alone permitted, under Title VI.[62]

Ending Title VII Enforcement

On June 9, 2026, the DOJ Office of Legal Counsel released a statement deeming the EEOC's interpretation of disparate-impact theory under Title VII unconstitutional.[63] The Justice Department's opinion purports to implement Executive Order 14281, which reflects this administration's hostility to disparate-impact liability, claiming that "[Title VII] creates a near insurmountable presumption [that] unlawful discrimination exists where there are any differences in [employment] outcomes in certain circumstances among different races, sexes, or similar groups." [64] Those bringing a disparate-impact claim must now show that the challenged hiring practice directly caused an unequal outcome and must identify an equally effective hiring approach that would result in more-equal outcomes.[65] Upon the release of this statement, Blanche claimed that "despite trying to promote equality, EEOC's disparate-impact liability interpretation under Title VII actually fosters the very discrimination its guidelines seek to address." [66] In actuality, these new guidelines pose the "near insurmountable" barrier, making it nearly impossible for employees' claims to succeed. Blanche claims the new guidelines will allow employers to "hire based on performance." [67] This dog-whistle plays into the false narrative that disparate-impact enforcement creates undue preferential treatment for Black employees and employees of color. It ignores the discriminatory policies and practices that exist in some places of employment today, especially in sectors such as the firefighting industry where women and Black employees continue to face unfair barriers. This Justice Department's gutting of Title VII sends the wrong message to employers, makes it hard for victims of discrimination to prevail, and will lead to the resurgence of discrimination in the hiring context, all while making it harder to achieve equal employment opportunity in our country.



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Abandoning Environmental Justice Enforcement

Under Todd Blanche, the Justice Department has shuttered environmental justice matters, despite the heavier burdens borne by poor communities and communities of color. Shortly after Blanche became the acting Attorney General, the DOJ Civil Rights Division terminated a case of environmental justice involving a poor, majority Black community in Lowndes County, Alabama.[68] For generations, Black residents of Lowndes County lacked access to basic sanitation services. And as a result, residents had been exposed to raw sewage in their neighborhoods, yards, playgrounds, schools, and even inside their own homes. Residents fell ill and were subjected to disease and public health risks that resulted from their reliance on straight piping. The Department terminated a comprehensive settlement negotiated by the parties in 2023 that required Alabama's health agencies to provide Lowndes County residents with long overdue and adequate sanitation and wastewater disposal facilities.[69] The DOJ has also filed suit against Minnesota to block their lawsuit against Exxon Mobile.[70] This is an example of Blanche protecting oil companies from litigation – failing to hold them accountable for their pollution which has a discriminate impact on Black people and other people of color. Black and Indigenous populations face the gravest health disparities and environmental harm from climate change.[71] The Justice Department's placement of corporate interests ahead of communities and disregard for the real environmental justice concerns plaguing communities is disturbing.

Conclusion

The NAACP opposes any individual for the position of Attorney General who has an established record of opposing the very civil rights, civil liberties, or human rights laws, policies, and programs for which they would be responsible for enforcing. Based on this standard, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People opposes the confirmation of Todd Blanche to serve as Attorney General of the United States. Todd Blanche's Department of Justice would spell disaster for Americans and especially for people of color. From minimizing the discrimination and injustices people of color face to perpetuating such injustices, Blanche would prove harmful to the very people the NAACP seeks to advocate for and protect. Todd Blanche has corrupted the enforcement of our federal civil rights laws and distorted what it means to protect civil rights. Under Todd Blanche's leadership, the Department of Justice would continue to stray from its founding purpose of justice, fairness, and accountability.

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- [61] *Id.*
- [62] *Id.*

NAACP OPPOSITION TO THE NOMINATION OF TODD BLANCHE FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL

A COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

NAACP

CITATIONS

[63] <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-concludes-eeoc-disparate-impact-guidelines-violate-constitution>

[64] *Id.*

[65] *Id.*

[66] *Id.*

[67] <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-concludes-eeoc-disparate-impact-guidelines-violate-constitution>

[68] <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/live/2025/apr/11/donald-trump-tariffs-health-check-immigration-el-salvador-us-politics-live-updates?page=with%3Ablock-67f973668f0825dc3aa141b6#block-67f973668f0825dc3aa141b6>

[69] *Id.*

[70] [https://www.crowell.com/en/insights/client-alerts/doj-continues-attempt-to-block-state-court-climate-suits-with-minnesota-](https://www.crowell.com/en/insights/client-alerts/doj-continues-attempt-to-block-state-court-climate-suits-with-minnesota-complaint#:~:text=On%20May%204%2C%202026%2C%20the%20U.S.%20Department%20of,global%20greenhouse%20gas%20emissions%E2%80%94intrude%20on%20exclusive%20federal%20authority.)

[complaint#:~:text=On%20May%204%2C%202026%2C%20the%20U.S.%20Department%20of,global%20greenhouse%20gas%20emissions%E2%80%94intrude%20on%20exclusive%20federal%20authority.](https://www.crowell.com/en/insights/client-alerts/doj-continues-attempt-to-block-state-court-climate-suits-with-minnesota-complaint#:~:text=On%20May%204%2C%202026%2C%20the%20U.S.%20Department%20of,global%20greenhouse%20gas%20emissions%E2%80%94intrude%20on%20exclusive%20federal%20authority.)

[71] <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40572-022-00360-w>