

Notable SC efforts to preserve inclusivity

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Let us reaffirm our commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion – values that are not just ideals but essential to the League’s mission of empowering voters and defending democracy. DEI is not a checkbox. It is a lens through which we view every action, every decision, every initiative, and account for every dollar spent. It means amplifying voices that have been historically silenced, ensuring equitable access to resources, and fostering a culture where every individual feels valued and heard.

In recent history, South Carolina has seen significant debates and actions surrounding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts. On one hand, DEI initiatives have aimed to address systemic inequities and promote inclusivity in education, workplaces, and government. However, these efforts have faced challenges and opposition.

For example, recent legislative proposals, such as the “Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity Act,” have sought to limit or eliminate DEI programs in state agencies, schools, and universities. Proponents of these measures argue that DEI initiatives can lead to discrimination based on race or gender, while critics emphasized the importance of such programs in fostering equity and representation.

Despite these challenges, many individuals and organizations in South Carolina continue to advocate for DEI. Groups like LWVSC have highlighted the positive impact of DEI on the state’s progress and inclusivity. Additionally, educators and community leaders have found creative ways to preserve and promote diverse histories and perspectives, even in the face of restrictions.

The conversation around DEI in South Carolina reflects broader national debates, balancing the need for inclusivity with differing views on how to achieve it.

A number of notable efforts in throughout the state include:

H3572 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education

H3184 DEI in State Universities

H3186 Historical Monuments

H3220 Noncitizen Terrorist Activity Prohibition

H3178 Establish Juneteenth as a State holiday

H3219 Rejecting Racism in Postsecondary Education

H3484 Student and Administration Equality Act

S0010 Family Leave

S0043 SC Public Expression Protection Act (also H3305)

S0199 Student Physical Privacy Act

~Hannah E. Parker, Director, DEI, League of Women Voters of South Carolina