

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 2, 2026

The Honorable Aftab Pureval
Mayor
City of Cincinnati
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Mayor Pureval,

I write to express my concern regarding the potentially illegal and wasteful DEI Procurement Ordinance adopted this month by the Cincinnati City Council.¹ Taxpayers should never foot the bill for woke DEI policies or initiatives. Unfortunately, however, the DEI Procurement Ordinance expands an already bloated DEI bureaucracy at City Hall and creates a new office that will likely subject all the City of Cincinnati's contracts to a DEI analysis. Cincinnati's taxpayers deserve a government that rewards competence and merit, not politically driven quotas or preferences based on race or ethnicity. The City spends roughly three to five million dollars annually on DEI initiatives, grants, and departments with DEI policy objectives.² These public dollars should be used to address real problems such as the City's \$30 million budget deficit³ or to protect citizens and businesses from violent crime.

Fortunately, the days of choosing public contract winners based on excellence are back. I agree with President Trump that "DEI activities are not only unethical and often illegal, but also cause inefficiencies, waste, and abuse within entities that engage in such practices...[and] also create unnecessary costs by reducing the pool of available labor by artificially limiting companies to hiring or promoting certain individuals, suppliers, or intermediaries based on their race or ethnicity."⁴ The City of Cincinnati must be a better steward of public funds.

President Trump issued multiple executive orders seeking to eliminate racial discrimination in government programs, higher education, and the contracting process (Executive Orders 14151, 14173, and 14398). In light of these executive orders, the Department of Justice issued a memorandum for recipients of federal funding regarding unlawful discrimination.⁵ Additionally,

¹ Cincinnati Ordinance No. 202601864 (2026).

² *Leveraged Support*, City of Cincinnati, <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/budget/leveraged-support/> (last visited June 9, 2026).
See also

FY 2026–2027 All Funds Biennial Budget, Vol. I: Recommended Capital Improvement Program, The City of Cincinnati Office of Budget and Evaluation (2026), <https://cincyweb.cincinnati-oh.gov/sites/budget/assets/City-of-Cincinnati-FY-2026-2027-Biennial-Budget-Vol-I-Operating.pdf?>. *See also* *Climate Equity Budgeting*, City of Cincinnati, <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/oes/city-operations/climate-equity-budgeting/> (last visited June 9, 2026).

³ *Fiscal Year 2027 Recommended All Funds Budget Update*, The City of Cincinnati (2026), <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/budget/budget-documents/recommended-fy-2027-budget-update/>.

⁴ Exec. Order No. 14,398, 91 Fed. Reg. 16,147 (Mar. 26, 2026).

⁵ Memorandum on Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination (July 29, 2025), https://www.justice.gov/ag/media/1409486/dl?inline=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

the Department of Justice’s Office of Legal Counsel recently concluded that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s disparate-impact guidelines violate the United States Constitution by pressuring employers to engage in racial discrimination.⁶


As an entity that receives significant federal funds, I urge you to review these documents, given that it appears your DEI Procurement Ordinance completely ignores them.⁷ Amazingly, your office even admits it in its explanation: “The goal of this restructuring is not to reduce the City’s focus on inclusion. Instead, it is intended to strengthen it...”⁸ Ohioans deserve to know that their hard-earned taxpayer dollars are awarded to individuals and businesses based on merit, not race or ethnicity.

Additionally, the adoption of this Ordinance represents a gross misallocation of resources at a time when the city faces a surge in violent crime, including multiple recent homicides, a mass shooting, and a persistent law enforcement recruitment crisis that undermines public safety.⁹ Instead of fueling divisive social experiments, these public funds should be redirected to protecting Cincinnatians and restoring order to Ohio’s streets.

Please respond within five business days of receipt of this letter with the information requested below:

- (1) The exact amount of federal funds the City of Cincinnati received in Fiscal Years 2024, 2025, and 2026;
- (2) The projected cost of the implementation of the DEI Procurement Ordinance No. 202601864;
- (3) The process by which the City of Cincinnati’s Department of Economic Inclusion and Procurement will seek applications, review, and award contracts;
- (4) How the City of Cincinnati is complying with the Department of Justice’s Memorandum regarding Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination; and
- (5) The most recent City of Cincinnati law enforcement professional staffing data.

Sincerely,



Bernie Moreno
United States Senator

⁶ Press Release, Department of Justice, Justice Department Concludes EEOC Disparate-Impact Guidelines Violate the Constitution (June 9, 2026), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-concludes-eEOC-disparate-impact-guidelines-violate-constitution>.

⁷ *FY 2026–2027 All Funds Biennial Budget, Vol. II: Recommended Capital Improvement Program*, The City of Cincinnati Office of Budget and Evaluation (2026), <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/sites/budget/assets/City-of-Cincinnati-FY-2026-2027-Biennial-Budget-Vol-II-Capital.pdf>.

⁸ Cincinnati Ordinance No. 202601864 (2026).

⁹ WCPO 9 Cincinnati, *Crime* (last visited June 17, 2026), <https://www.wcpo.com/news/crime>.

cc: The Honorable Harmeet Dhillon, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, United States
Department of Justice