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Leading Social Scientists Find Powerful Research Base for Affirmative Action
Scholars Pledge Help to Universities

LOS ANGELES— The Civil Rights Project is releasing today a statement by leading scholars highlighting rigorous social science research that could provide guidance to universities assessing their diversity plans in the context of the Supreme Court’s ruling on affirmative action, in *Fisher v. the University of Texas, at Austin*. Today’s statement points to the broad and deep base of research literature on affirmative action and points to support from the research community that universities can draw upon in evaluating their affirmative action plans.

The *Fisher* decision makes clear that promoting diversity in higher education can justify race-conscious admissions policies when they are carefully designed and implemented. On the one hand, the Supreme Court’s decision reaffirmed the existing legal precedents and the right of colleges to pursue diversity as an essential educational goal. (An analysis of this decision, by a group of the nation’s leading constitutional scholars, was released last week by the Civil Rights Project.) On the other hand, the Court sent the University of Texas plan back to the lower courts for a closer look. Colleges across the country may be wondering what they need to prepare for possible challenges under last week’s decision; the Civil Rights Project, with many of the nation’s leading scholars, are working together to help universities answer that challenge. The social science research in today’s statement may be addressed by the lower courts if universities’ diversity plans are challenged, which has rarely happened.

Professor Catherine Horn of the University of Houston, one of the drafters of the social science statement, commented, “The Civil Rights Project, which has produced numerous studies related to college access over the last 16 years, will be working with educators and communities across the country to support colleges as they review and strengthen the documentation of their diversity plans.”

CRP Co-Director, Professor Gary Orfield, also noted, “Colleges can and should consider the strong body of social science research supporting diversity plans and they should conduct their own research applied to local conditions, particularly to defend strong affirmative action

plans. In fact, reviewing these plans in light of new research can make them even more educationally powerful.”

READ THE STATEMENT BY LEADING SOCIAL SCIENTISTS: <http://tinyurl.com/mrvp6gh>

READ THE STATEMENT BY CONSTITUTIONAL LAW SCHOLARS: <http://tinyurl.com/m5c4wgl>

About The Civil Rights Project at UCLA

Founded in 1996 by former Harvard professors [Gary Orfield](#) and Christopher Edley, Jr., The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles is now co-directed by Orfield and [Patricia Gándara](#), professors at UCLA. Its mission is to create a new generation of research in social science and law on the critical issues of civil rights and equal opportunity for racial and ethnic groups in the United States. It has commissioned more than 500 [studies](#), published more than 15 [books](#) and issued numerous reports from authors at universities and research centers across the country.

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