

Dear State leaders,

We write to you on behalf of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) to express our concern about the growing calls within the Florida legislature for withdrawal of State support for action and advocacy for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Founded in 1975, NSBE is a college student-led, nonprofit organization with more than 14,000 collegiate, K–12 student and technical professional members; 650 chapters in the United States and abroad; and a strong presence of active members in Florida — at colleges including Florida A&M University, Florida State University and others, and at elementary, middle and high schools across the state — all committed to ending the underrepresentation of African Americans in engineering and to increasing the number of Black engineers and other Black STEM professionals worldwide.

NSBE's mission is to graduate academically excellent, professionally successful, socially relevant Black engineers and other Black STEM practitioners from college, and we're good at it. The average GPA of our members is 3.39, including our 7,439 collegiate members, 2,078 of whom are in their senior year, on the doorstep of professional success.

Our nationwide chapters and programs are at the heart of NSBE's work to build and maintain a vibrant STEM pipeline. Senate Bill 266 (SB 266) and its companion bill, House Bill 999 (HB 999), stand to hinder the continued success of NSBE as it will impact our ability to:

- Host [NSBE's Summer Engineering Experience for Kids \(SEEK\)](#) program, which are held in educational facilities in Florida and other parts of the US to provide high-quality learning opportunities to underrepresented students who otherwise may not have access to a robust STEM education.
- Convene at the chapter level, which is key in the educational success and career readiness of NSBE's collegiate members.
- Operate within our organizational model, which calls for collegiate members to convene as leaders of the organization, as they participate at the board-level, fellowship, and receive mentorship in the interest of long-term career preparation and success.
- Succeed professionally, as NSBE's professional membership base is strongly present in the educational sector, and thus will be negatively impacted by the forbidding of DEI consideration in the hiring process, and the censorship inherent in the legislation that will undermine or eliminate DEI roles NSBE professionals fulfill.

We ask that the Florida legislature join with NSBE and our many allies, and with other leaders of vision and conscience across the country, in embracing the true diversity, equity and inclusion that will make it possible for our nation to realize its democratic ideals and achieve its full economic potential.

Yours in truth,

Janeen Uzzell
NSBE CEO

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NSBE National Chair, 2022-2023

Avery Lane
NSBE National Chair, 2023-2024