

affirmative action

Affirmative action is a tool designed to expand job and educational opportunities to women and people of color to remedy past and present-day discrimination. Affirmative action tools include outreach, recruitment, training, and promotion to ensure that positive steps are taken to advance qualified women and people of color. Over the past forty years, affirmative action programs have significantly expanded employment and educational opportunities to underrepresented groups.

Opponents of affirmative action policies argue that affirmative action is reverse discrimination because the policies unfairly benefit individuals based on their gender and racial backgrounds for educational and employment opportunities. Some opponents of affirmative action also argue that socio-economic status is just as important, and possibly more important, than gender or racial background and therefore should be taken into account.

Supporters of affirmative action argue that despite recent progress, women and people of color still do not have access to resources and opportunities that allow a person to participate in society with full dignity and equality. They argue that women and people of color still face fewer job and educational opportunities, lower wages, and economic uncertainty and repealing affirmative action programs would reverse hard-fought gains made over the last forty years. Supporters also point out that while much attention is focused on individuals as beneficiaries of affirmative action programs, the programs also help critical institutions in our society. For example, affirmative action programs help businesses compete in today's global economy by providing a workforce that reflects the diversity of the country.

YWCA Position

The YWCA supports the maintenance and strengthening of affirmative action laws to protect people from discrimination on the basis of race and gender.

Candidate Questions

What is your position on affirmative action?

What is your policy agenda regarding affirmative action if elected?