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MEDIA ADVISORY

Protect Truth in Education

Advocates to Gather in Preparation for Alabama's Upcoming Legislative Session

BIRMINGHAM, AL (December 20, 2021) – The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Project Say Something, and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund will host advocates from across the state on January 8, 2022, to strategize about how to protect truth in education and prepare for Alabama's upcoming legislative session. Held in collaboration with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and Project Say Something, a portion of the program will be broadcast live on social media at 11:00 a.m.

Across the nation, state legislators are working to implement bans on critical race theory, a term that's expanded to include virtually any discussions and trainings around equity or antiracism in local school systems. In August, the Alabama Board of Education passed an Anti-Truth Resolution, mistitled "Declaring the Preservation of Intellectual Freedom and Non-Discrimination in Alabama's Public Schools" - which may prohibit educators from teaching the full and accurate history of racial discrimination and civil rights in Alabama and in the United States, as well as the continuing struggle of people of color to secure full equality.

With the mission of enlightening each generation about civil and human rights by exploring our common past and working together in the present to build a better future, The Institute believes in the importance of teaching an unvarnished history that contains a diversity of viewpoints. Several inquiries have marked the year regarding efforts to teach only "patriotic education" in schools, as well as the elimination of critical race theory in curriculum. It is in that vein that BCRI has partnered with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and Project Say Something to hold this community education event. "If we want to create a better future for all, it is imperative that we are able to know and understand history with all of its warts and wrinkles," said John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas, BCRI Executive Fellow. "Only that way we can avoid the mistakes of our past."

Project Truth in Education will be a day-long gathering hosted in two parts. The convening will begin with a community education program facilitated by BCRI historians and educators. **All are invited to tune in to this portion of the event, live on the BCRI Facebook and YouTube pages.** The second part of the event will be led by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and Project Say Something and provide interested advocates with an opportunity to learn about bills that have been pre-filed with the Alabama legislature to prevent teaching accurate history and current events. We'll build coalition and prepare for the advocacy needed to preserve historical accuracy in Alabama schools.

Testing and other COVID-19 safety protocols are required for in-person attendance. Limited financial assistance is available for those requiring support for transportation and lodging at a first come, first served basis. Those interested in joining the efforts of these advocates to support diversity education can RSVP at bcri.org and follow The Institute for updates on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter - @bhamcivilrights.

About BCRI: The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute is a cultural and educational research center that promotes a comprehensive understanding for the significance of The Civil Rights Movement in Birmingham. For nearly 30 years, we have enlightened each generation about civil and human rights. A part of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, we stand strong as the cornerstone of the civil rights story, a living memorial with an ongoing mission.