



October 28, 2020

Dear Members of the New York State Congressional Delegation:

Our organizations represent several hundred community-based agencies serving individuals, children, and families across New York State. Far too many of these families are impacted by systemic racism. We write to you regarding President Trump's Executive Order 13950. We urge the New York delegation to denounce EO 13950, Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping. We ask that the delegation lead an effort to rescind, end or prevent the continuation of the Order as soon as politically possible, but request that you speak out against the EO immediately.

Our request comes on behalf of our provider agencies that will be impacted if the mandate stands because they hold federal contracts or grants. As employers of thousands of essential workers, we reject the premise of EO 13950 which may reverse decades of progress in combating racial inequity.

The New York State communities hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic are emblematic of the systemic inequities that face our black and brown residents. Daily, residents of those communities must fight to overcome economic, criminal justice, educational, environmental, health care, and social injustices. As service providers, we must strive to offer treatment and supports that respond to individualized needs. In so doing, we must embrace diversity, inclusion, cultural and equity values in the hope that through continuous quality improvement and change lenses, our organizations will be much better able to respond to the needs, including underlying racism, of their clients.

Without first acknowledging and understanding the systemic nature of our nation's racism, little progress to ameliorate the offending behaviors and policies can be made. We are opposed to EO 13950 as a barrier to open and honest discussions on these issues. Prohibiting federal agencies and their contractors from conducting trainings that promote racial understanding and reconciliation is the antithesis of combatting systemic racism.

Help us continue our efforts on inclusion and equity. Denounce EO 13950. Demand that it be rescinded. Develop a plan to ensure the barriers and restrictions end as soon as possible. Please share your plans with me via [andrea@asmythadvocacy.com](mailto:andrea@asmythadvocacy.com) and we will stand with you!

Sincerely,

*Andrea Smyth*, Executive Director, NYS Coalition for Children's Behavioral Health

*Michelle Jackson*, Human Service Council

*James Purcell*, President and CEO, Council on Family Child Caring Agencies

*Lauri Cole*, NYS Council for Community Behavioral Health

*John Coppola*, Addiction and Substance Abuse Providers in NYS