

Press Coverage | February 21, 2025

# ‘Lifting’ Becomes ‘Leveling’: Companies Reframe DEI Amid Trump Upheaval

## RELATED PROFESSIONALS

[Tracey E. Diamond](#)

---

Tracey Diamond, a member of Troutman Pepper Locke’s Labor + Employment Practice Group, was quoted in the February 21, 2025 *Washington Post* article, [“‘Lifting’ Becomes ‘Leveling’: Companies Reframe DEI Amid Trump Upheaval.”](#)

Companies are scrambling to strike a balance that keeps them out of the crosshairs of an administration that is openly antagonistic toward DEI, without negating its benefits. But the lack of clarity over what constitutes “illegal DEI” in the eyes of the Trump administration has rattled executives amid growing recognition that methods used for decades to attract and retain diverse talent are no longer viable, according to Tracey Diamond, an employment attorney at Troutman Pepper Locke in Princeton.

As they reorient, businesses are discarding workforce representation goals and identity-based employee resource groups, rebranding and toning down DEI references in public-facing documents. They’re reframing their policies around “leveling” the playing field for all employees — “whether they’re in the majority or minority,” Diamond said — rather than “lifting” people on the basis of race, gender or other considerations.

## RELATED INDUSTRIES + PRACTICES

- [Labor + Employment](#)