

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2509

August 13, 2020

Hon. Dan Brouillette  
Secretary of Energy  
United States Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Hon. Lisa E. Gordon-Hagerty  
Under Secretary for Nuclear Security & NNSA Administrator  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
1000 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Brouillette and Under Secretary Gordon-Hagerty:

I write to draw your attention to a series of “diversity, equity, and inclusion” trainings—specifically, the “Full Diversity Partners Lab,” “White Men & Allies Learning Lab,” and “White Men’s Caucus” programs—paid for by Sandia National Laboratories and held at the “upscale”<sup>1</sup> La Posada de Santa Fe luxury hotel and resort. These trainings were conducted on July 10–13, 2018, July 21–August 1, 2019, September 3–6, 2019, and possibly on other occasions.

The reported content of these trainings is deeply disturbing. In a conscious attempt to avoid scrutiny of these workshops’ content, readers of the “White Men’s Caucus” workbook are advised that “[t]aken out of context, the notes and insights might be misleading” and accordingly “recommends that they be for the use of participants only.” But much of the content largely speaks for itself:

- During the “White Men’s Caucus” program, it appears that attendees were required to engage in a free-association project about “white men.” Word associations included “MAGA hat,” “Aryan Nation,” “mass killings,” “can’t dance” and “no rhythm.”
- During the “White Men’s Caucus,” participants were instructed to write messages “directed to white women, people of color and other groups regarding the meaning of this Caucus experience for you.”
- During the “White Men & Allies Learning Lab,” participants were asked to generate a list of “assumptions about white women.” These assumptions included “better cooks,” “more emotional,” and “develop deeper emotional relationships so are not as technical as men.”
- During the “White Men & Allies Learning Lab,” participants were asked to generate a list of “assumptions about people of color.” These assumptions included “have broken families,” “feel victimized,” and “buck authority.”
- During the “White Men & Allies Learning Lab,” participants were asked to generate a list of examples of “male privilege,” which included “men can be strong enough to open jar lids” and “men can kill bugs more easily than ‘most’ women.”

I fail to see how this fixation on the crudest imaginable gender and race stereotypes is productive or worthy of the expenditure of taxpayer dollars. The focus on providing trainings specifically for “white men” is similarly concerning: while the race of the various participants in these workshops is not altogether clear, the use of overtly race-segregated diversity trainings would likely violate federal civil rights law.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.laposadadesantafe.com/gallery/>

It is also notable that Sandia workers' participation in these trainings does not appear to have been voluntary: at the start of the "White Men's Caucus" program, one anonymous participant noted his concern that the training was "freaking long" and that he would be missing his 10-year-old's birthday in order to participate.

Finally, the Department has a responsibility to use federal taxpayers' dollars prudently and responsibly. Outside DOE, significant amounts of federal money have already flowed to the organization behind the Sandia trainings, "White Men as Full Diversity Partners." For its part, NASA has paid the group at least \$36,000: almost \$25,000 in 2011 for "building full diversity partnerships that include and engage white men,"<sup>2</sup> and just over \$11,000 in 2013 for a program focused on "exploring the critical role of white men in building an inclusive work culture," which lasted almost 7 months.<sup>3</sup> The Department of Defense paid the same organization almost \$10,000 in 2018 for a "leadership engagement session."<sup>4</sup>

In 2020, Sandia National Laboratories received \$3.76 billion in federal government funding.<sup>5</sup>

The Department should immediately undertake a comprehensive review of its procedures and practices to ensure that taxpayers are no longer required to fund such divisive and ineffective trainings. Moreover, I request that the Department provide the following materials to my office—as well as to the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs—no later than August 21, 2020:

- An enumeration of all sums paid by any Department of Energy entity or affiliate to the organization "White Men as Full Diversity Partners" and any other diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training groups.
- Copies of all DEI materials used to train the employees of Department of Energy entities or affiliates.
- The dates of all DEI trainings conducted by outside organizations for the employees of Department of Energy entities or affiliates.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,



Josh Hawley  
United States Senator

CC: Department of Energy, Office of the Inspector General

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.usaspending.gov/#/award/CONT\\_AWD\\_NNX11TA75P\\_8000\\_-NONE\\_-NONE-](https://www.usaspending.gov/#/award/CONT_AWD_NNX11TA75P_8000_-NONE_-NONE-)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.usaspending.gov/#/award/CONT\\_AWD\\_NNX12TF32P\\_8000\\_-NONE\\_-NONE-](https://www.usaspending.gov/#/award/CONT_AWD_NNX12TF32P_8000_-NONE_-NONE-)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.usaspending.gov/#/award/CONT\\_AWD\\_N0017818P6338\\_9700\\_-NONE\\_-NONE-](https://www.usaspending.gov/#/award/CONT_AWD_N0017818P6338_9700_-NONE_-NONE-)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.abqjournal.com/1428165/sandia-labs-may-get-300-million-budget-increase.html>