

**Statement of Commissioner Charlotte A. Burrows
on the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's
Decision to Abandon its Long-Standing Interpretation of
Section 707 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

September 3, 2020

As Americans call for an end to systemic discrimination, it's unconscionable that the agency charged with remedying job discrimination is working to roll back civil rights. The opinion letter issued today by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission abandons the government's long-standing interpretation of section 707 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which has been used in both Republican and Democratic administrations to protect Americans from any pattern or practice of resistance to equal employment opportunities. The legal theory this letter rejects has been used for decades to stop especially severe civil rights violations in employment, such as when the federal government successfully sued the Ku Klux Klan for violently attacking African Americans seeking job opportunities. Today the Commission not only abandons its duty to enforce the law as Congress intended, but it does so without any opportunity for prior public notice and comment.

I strongly oppose this ill-considered change and urge the Commission to rescind it.

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