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Air traffic controllers union responds to Trump's DEI attacks

BY TAYLOR GIORNO - 01/31/25 3:54 PM ET



The air traffic controllers union responded Friday to claims by [President Trump](#) this week that diversity programs contributed to the fatal crash in Washington Wednesday night.

“Air traffic controllers earn the prestigious and elite status of being a fully certified professional controller after successfully completing a series of rigorous training milestones. The standards to achieve certifications are not based on race or gender,” Nick Daniels, president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), [said in a statement](#).

“The proud men and women that comprise the national aviation safety professionals bear the immense responsibility of ensuring the safety and efficiency of the national airspace system, while working short-staffed, often 6 days a week, and in facilities long overdue for modernization.”

Trump on Thursday [blasted diversity, equity and inclusion](#) (DEI) initiatives at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which provides air traffic services to airports across the country, during the Biden and Obama administrations.

“Brilliant people have to be in those positions,” Trump said, citing efforts by the FAA to hire individuals with disabilities.

The president [doubled down on his DEI comments](#) in a Friday post, which included screenshots claiming the FAA pushed to hire individuals with “severe intellectual” and “psychiatric” disabilities.

“This is just one reason why our Country WAS going to hell!!!” Trump wrote.

Daniels said the union was committed to working with Trump to “recruit the best and brightest” and address concerns including pay, benefits and the “mounting stress that comes with this demanding job.”

TAGS AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS DEI DONALD TRUMP DONALD TRUMP FAA NATCA

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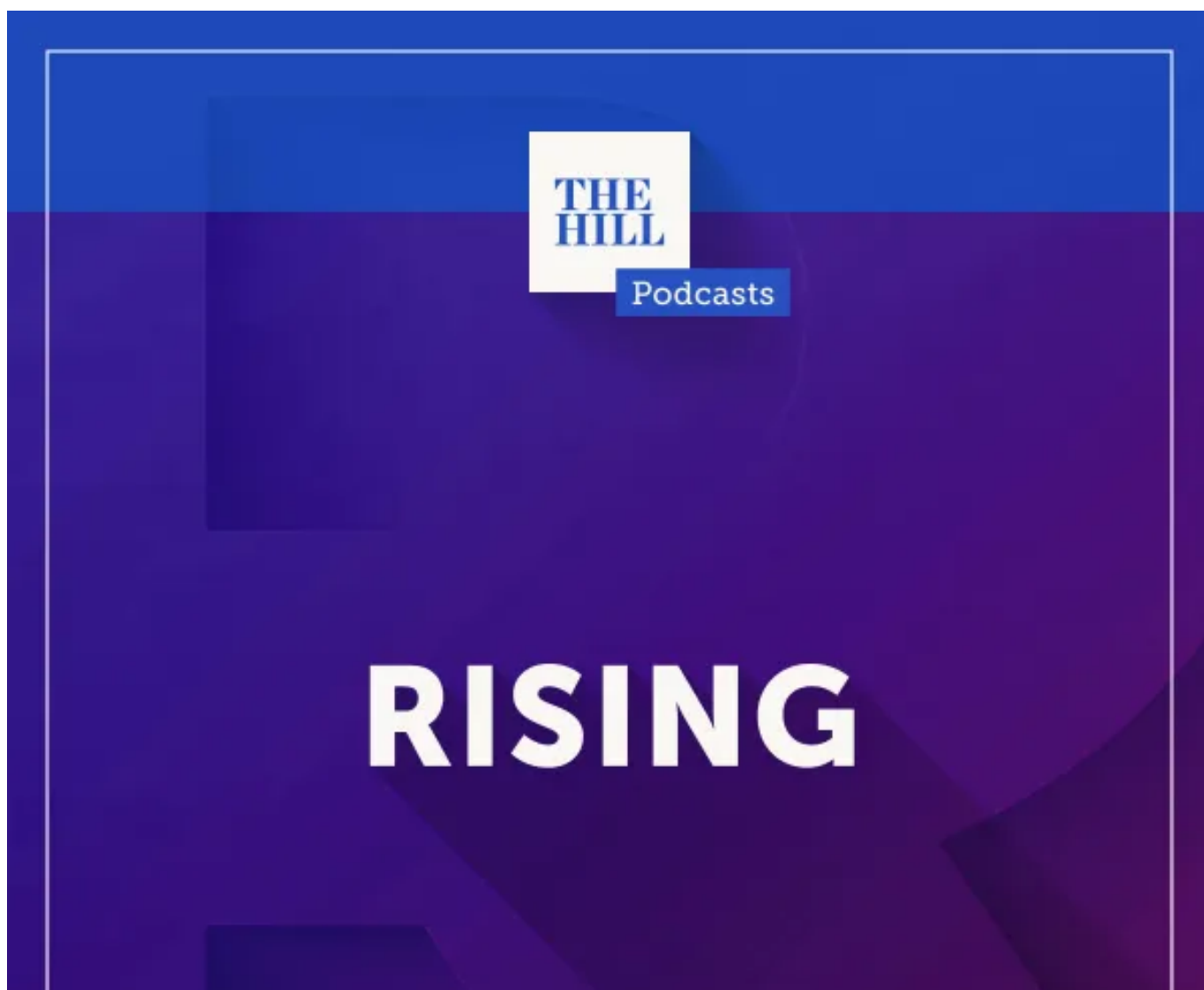
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