

The Push for All-In Pricing Picks Up Speed Across Multiple Fronts

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Hi there - welcome back to another edition of *The Regulatory Check-In*!

This week's roundup covers a lot of ground: an EEOC lawsuit that should make every employer rethink gender-specific programming, a \$35 million FTC settlement over hidden travel fees, new junk fee rules hitting hotels and restaurants in multiple jurisdictions, the ongoing DEI enforcement saga, the EEOC's rescission of longstanding affirmative action guidance, a diverging AI compliance landscape, the long-reach of California's plastics law, and a discovery ruling in AI copyright litigation that should be on every company's radar.

EEOC Takes Aim at Women-Only Corporate Events: The EEOC sued Coca-Cola Beverages Northeast over a women-only networking retreat, alleging Title VII sex discrimination for excluding male employees. The problem wasn't the topic of the event (women in leadership). It was gating employer-provided benefits (paid time off, travel, lodging) behind sex-based exclusion without offering an equivalent alternative to everyone else. If you're hosting or sponsoring gender-specific employee events, take note: even well-intentioned professional development programming may invite Title VII scrutiny if it excludes a protected class from employer-provided benefits.

Hopper's Settles Hidden "Junk Fee" Dispute for \$35 Million: Travel app Hopper will pay \$35 million to settle FTC allegations it charged hidden fees while advertising "no hidden fees." If you're operating a travel booking platform or running online reservations, review your checkout flows-the FTC's Rule on Unfair or Deceptive Fees (effective May 2025) gives them teeth to enforce all-in pricing.

Florida's New Restaurant Fee Transparency Law Takes Effect: Florida's SB 606 (effective July 1, 2026) requires food service establishments to disclose all mandatory fees (including service charges, auto-gratuities, credit card surcharges, delivery fees) before customers order. If you have on-site F&B operations in Florida, make sure your menus and POS systems are updated for compliance. SB 606 also updates Florida's lodging laws to grant lodging operators clearer powers to remove holdover non-paying guests.

NYC Bans Hidden Hotel "Junk Fees": NYC adopted a final rule (effective January 22, 2027) making it a deceptive trade practice to advertise a hotel price without disclosing all mandatory fees and credit card holds. Importantly, it applies to hotels outside NYC that advertise to New Yorkers. If you're charging deposits, resort or destination fees on bookings, or placing holds on credit cards upon check-in, this

impacts you.

Illinois Bans Junk Fees, Ticket Bots, and Speculative Ticket Sales: Illinois banned junk fees, ticket-buying bots, and speculative ticket resales. The junk fee ban (HB 228, effective January 1, 2027) requires all mandatory fees in the advertised price-covering hotels, concerts, food orders, and online purchases.

Federal Judge Blocks Use of DEI Orders to Withhold City Funding: A federal judge temporarily blocked the administration from using anti-DEI executive orders to withhold city funding, finding the orders unconstitutionally vague. For hospitality companies, the downstream risk is real: if cities or government entities face funding disruptions or contract terminations tied to DEI compliance, that could flow through to group travel bookings, convention business, and government-contracted hotel blocks. If you hold group sales contracts with government entities, watch this space.

EEOC Rescinds Decades-Old Affirmative Action Guidance: The EEOC rescinded its ~40-year-old affirmative action guidelines under Title VII. The big takeaway: this eliminates the safe harbor that let employers defend claims by showing good-faith reliance on EEOC guidance. It signals heightened scrutiny of sex- or race-conscious employment practices. If you still have voluntary affirmative action programs in place, review them with counsel now.

Constructing AI Compliance Plans as State Laws Diverge: Three wildly different AI regulatory approaches dropped in a three-week span. Colorado scaled back its AI Act to transparency-only obligations (effective Jan. 1, 2027). Connecticut went comprehensive: its AI Responsibility and Transparency Act regulates employment-related AI tools, consumer chatbots, frontier models, and synthetic content provenance, with staggered compliance dates starting October 1, 2026 (anti-discrimination and developer-deployer framework), employment deployer obligations by October 1, 2027, and AI companion/chatbot rules by January 1, 2027. Meanwhile, the federal government released a discussion draft (the Great America AI Act) that would create a federal framework for frontier AI models and could preempt state development rules entirely. If you're using AI-driven tools for pricing, customer service chatbots, or hiring, start mapping which requirements apply to your operations-this patchwork is only getting more complex.

17 States Sue to Block California's Plastic Packaging Law: Seventeen states sued to block California's SB 54, the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act, arguing it violates the dormant Commerce Clause by forcing nationwide companies to conform to California's packaging rules. The law's final regulations became effective May 1, 2026. If your hospitality company has branded consumer products or packaging, monitor this one-the outcome could reshape compliance obligations nationwide.

Court Orders News Publishers to Produce AI Use Policies in Cohere Litigation: Fourteen major news publishers sued Cohere alleging Cohere used their copyrighted content to train its AI models without authorization. A federal magistrate judge ordered news publishers to produce their internal AI usage policies to AI startup Cohere. Takeaway: your internal AI governance documentation may become a litigation exhibit in the event you're involved in disputes concerning IP, content licensing or vendor

relationships. If your policies are vague, inconsistent, or reveal practices that conflict with your public-facing positions, that's a liability.

Until next time.

[Lessons From EEOC Suit Over Coca-Cola Women-Only Event](#)

July 6, 2026 via Law360

Picture this: Hundreds of your female employees are attending a two-day company-sponsored networking and professional development retreat. The itinerary is packed with keynote speakers, team-building exercises, career discussions and a social reception - all on the company's dime. Attendees are excused from their regular duties, paid their normal wages and not required to use vacation days to attend.

[Travel App Hopper to Pay \\$35 Million to Settle FTC Allegations It Charged Fees Without Consent and Deceived Users About Fees and Benefits of Some Products](#)

July 2, 2026 via U.S. Federal Trade Commission

The companies that operate the Hopper travel apps have agreed to pay \$35 million and will be prohibited from deceiving consumers about fees to settle the Federal Trade Commission's allegations that they unfairly charged consumers hidden fees and misrepresented the total prices consumers would pay and the benefits of the companies' VIP Support and Price Freeze services.

[Automatic Tip or Service Charge? New State Law Requires Restaurants to Tell Diners Before they Order](#)

July 1, 2026 via Fox News

People dining out in Florida should see fewer surprises when their check arrives beginning July 1. A new state law requires restaurants to clearly disclose mandatory fees and service charges before customers even place their orders.

[New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection \(DCWP\) NOA Limitations on Hotel Fees](#)

July 1, 2026 via DCWP

The Department of Consumer and Worker Protection is adding rules that prohibit charging consumers hidden "junk fees" for hotel stays. According to Consumer Reports and the Federal Trade Commission, "junk fees," commonly labeled as "destination fees," "resort fees," or "hospitality service fees," have become more prevalent in the hospitality industry over the past several years.

[Live Nation Applauds Illinois Ban on Speculative Ticket Sales, as State Outlaws Junk Fees, Ticket-Buying Bots](#)

July 1, 2026 via Music Business Worldwide

Illinois has banned junk fees, ticket-buying bots, and the resale of tickets that sellers don't yet possess.

[Feds Can't Use DEI Order To Block Cities' Funds, Judge Rules](#)

July 1, 2026 via Law360

A Washington federal judge Monday dealt a blow to President Donald Trump's efforts to restrict federal

funds going to cities and counties that promote diversity programming and “gender ideology,” ordering the administration to temporarily halt enforcement of two executive orders in several U.S. cities and counties.

[EEOC Scraps Long-Standing Affirmative Action Guidance](#)

June 30, 2026 via Law360

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced Tuesday it has rescinded several decades-old guidance documents relating to voluntary workplace affirmative action plans, concluding the previous positions were out of step with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

[Constructing AI Compliance Plans As State Laws Diverge](#)

June 26, 2026 via Law360

During the course of a three-week period in May and early June 2026, Colorado, Connecticut and the federal government announced wildly different approaches to artificial intelligence regulation.

[17 States Sue Over Calif. Regulation Of Plastic Packaging](#)

June 23, 2026 via Law360

Seventeen states and the National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors sued Golden State recycling regulators in California federal court Monday seeking to block a new state law regulating plastic packaging, slamming the law as California’s “blatant and unprecedented attempt to impose its own policy preferences on the entire nation.”

[News Orgs Must Give Cohere AI Use Policies](#)

June 18, 2026 via Law360

A New York federal magistrate judge has ordered a group of news and magazine publishers to turn over their policies on how artificial intelligence is used in their newsrooms to AI startup Cohere, as Cohere stands accused of improperly using copyrighted news content to train chatbots.

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