

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and other distinguished members of the Appropriations committee. My name is Dr. Edna Brown and I am a commissioner for the African American Affairs Commission. The mission of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut.

I support the governor's proposed budget for our Commission. While we would like to see more funding so we can do more work in the community we understand that these are tough budget times.

In the last year the AAAC has done great work with the legislature on student debt, criminal justice, education and housing. Some of our signature legislative measures that are relevant for education attainment were: getting all teachers cultural competence training, creating the student loan bill of rights, working on racial disparities in suspensions and expulsions in our schools, working on minority teacher recruitment. These signature legislative measures are critical to help ensure that all Connecticut children have a chance at attaining their education goals.

In the community we have held public forums to address racial profiling and we have been a part of numerous round table discussions and have worked closely with the religious community to address disparities that continue to exist in our communities. I have attended events that focus on health disparities in our communities. These events have attracted concerned residents from all CT communities including representatives from the medical, education, policy, and neighborhood community organization, all concerned with improving health outcomes for all CT citizens.

This year our legislative agenda includes working on legislation continuing our work to get more minority teachers into the classroom, and building upon the success of our student debt work.

I hope you will consider our important accomplishments and future goals in your deliberations.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edna Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Edna Brown, Ph.D., Commissioner African-American Affairs Commission