

March 5, 2019

Good afternoon everyone,

My name is Shawn Brooks I am a high school senior at Science and Technology Magnet High School in New London CT as well as a member of Hearing Youth Voices. Today I will be speaking in regards to Bill 7082: An Act Concerning the Inclusion of African American Studies in the Public School Curriculum. When I was informed about this Bill being implemented in the state of Connecticut I was filled with joy. I knew the seriousness of the matter and how it should be done. I support the enactment of this bill because as an African American male I tend to feel isolated in the classroom due to the fact that the other U.S history curriculums focus on white exceptionalism and black inferiority. In no other way, shape, or form do I want students to internally and psychologically feel inferior due to them not knowing their history and the achievements that come with it. As the father of Black History Dr. Carter G. Woodson says "If a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated." Dr. Woodson knew exactly what he was talking about, because of the long lasting effects this has on Black people, especially amongst our Youth. There is a determent of being proud to be an African American which plays a role into other symptoms like antiblackness, colorism, and so on. The Bill will empower ALL students to understand the grassroots fighters and builders of this nation. The inclusion of this Bill will show that African American History should be included in the dialogue with the American History curriculum.

Thank you for your time,

Shawn Brooks