

Dear members of the education committee of the Connecticut general assembly

My name is Dominick Burrel, I attend the Arts at the capitol theater magnet school making my way there everyday from New London. I am a member of Hearing youth voices where we learn to stand up for ourselves.

I'm here because I support Bil I7082 with SEJs recommended amendments. This bill is important to me because everyday I wake up and get ready for school feeling every single day is the same.

Growing up in New London means that certain stereotypes follow you to different places like "He's from new London he's not gonna make it anywhere, or like "By the time he's 13 he gonna have a criminal record." I personally am sick and tired of being in a elevator with white folks feeling the discomfort I feel when they clench their bag tighter to them, or when I've been accused me for being "racist" for speaking up on my opinions, when now is the day to speak up.

It's very frustrating to get to school and feel like I learn about nothing but the whitewashed history. I don't have a single black teacher that I can just ask questions about my heritage, or have conversations to get a better understanding of where I come from.

I like school, but I want to be able to learn about people that look like me, especially in the arts field. Talk about the things we have done, and we give credit to those who deserve it. Throughout my day of school I take different classes like ballet, hip-hop, and acting. In all my classes I try my best to express my life, and the melanin in my skin through my art, but this isn't just my responsibility, it should be all of ours.

Thank you for your time,

Dominick Burrel