

Dear Members of the Education Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Nkemka Esiobu MD MPH, I am a resident physician at Yale School of Medicine and live in New Haven. I am a supporter of the Students for Educational Justice efforts to promote racial justice in grade school curriculums. I support Bill 7082 with the Students for Educational Justice amendments.

This bill is important to me because I have experienced first hand the lack of education on race and racism in my own primary and secondary educational experiences. I had to educate my self as an adult about many aspects of Black History due to this part of history often being dismissed in schools. I have also witnessed this with multiple New Haven high school students I mentored through the Yale Health Professions Recruitment and Exposure Program (HPREP). I've heard several stories of students feeling dismissed and ignored in the classroom because of their race. As a psychiatrist, I understand the damaging impacts of implicit racial biases from otherwise well-meaning educators. These are biases that many of us hold due to the society that we live in and they subconsciously affect the way we behave towards others. There have been many iterations of doctors and police officers receiving this training that have been deemed evidence based and effective. I'd argue that the damaging impacts of exclusion, racial bias, and feeling left out of the narrative amongst children who are still in highly formative periods of their lives should be prioritized.

The role racism has played in the formation of the United States of America is essential for all Americans to learn and understand. It is of the utmost importance that it is taught well through formal trainings of all teachers undergoing racial bias training. This will contribute to the goal of delivering content is objective, honest, and consistent with the vision of the law and the needs of our youngest constituents.

I support Bill 7082 with the Students for Educational Justice amendments. The students of Connecticut deserve nothing less than a superb education.

Thank you for your time,
Nkemka Esiobu MD MPH
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