

March 5th, 2019

Testifier: Jillian Fiore

Related bill(s): House Bill 7082, *An Act Concerning the Inclusion of African-American Studies in the Public-School Curriculum*

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

My name is Jillian Fiore and I am a first-year criminal justice major at the University of New Haven. I am originally from Wakefield, Massachusetts, a town just north of Boston. At my town's public high school, Wakefield Memorial High School, there is a course offered named cultural studies. The course description of this course is, "Cultural Studies is a full year junior/senior elective course designed to trace the history and impact of African-Americans, Asian-Americans and Latino-Americans' impact on the history and culture of the United States". Although this course is an elective, I believe that it would better serve as a required course. Being a first-year college student at a diverse university, I feel that I was not properly taught the history of race and racism in the United States in high school.

I am writing to express my support of the House Bill 7082 because I believe that no student should move onto a higher education without proper knowledge of United States history. Most students do not understand that African American history is United States history, and this makes for uncertainty and discomfort when topics are brought up in a college course. I would also like to voice my support for the following amendments:

1. The amendment of the bill language to include "The History of Race and The History of Racism in the United States" as required curricular content (in addition to "African American Studies")

2. Required racial bias trainings for social studies teachers and administrators

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jillian Fiore

University of New Haven Undergraduate Student