

Kevin Gough & Paula Jones
5 Bear Ridge Drive
Bloomfield, CT 06002-1107

Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Support HB 7082 - An Act Concerning the Inclusion of African-American Studies in the Public School Curriculum

Dear Co-Chairs McCrory and Sanchez, Vice-Chairs Abrams and Barry, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and members of the Education Committee:

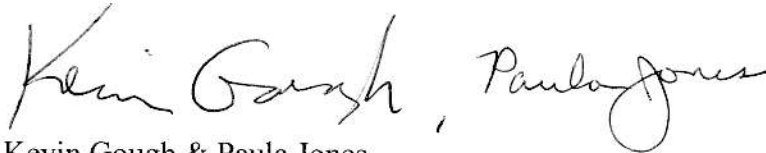
We write to support HB 7082.

Connecticut students, like most citizens, are exposed to some African American history via celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday in January and Black History Month in February each year. However, this small amount of exposure to the role of African Americans in our history and society is woefully inadequate.

This was made abundantly clear to us when we recently read Jeanne Theoharis's wonderful book *A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History*. Focused on the civil rights struggle of the post-WW II years into the 1970s, Ms. Theoharis's book looks at the extensive political participation by people from all walks of life that led to the signature legislation of the era. All were informed by an understanding of the long history of African Americans in the United States, from slavery through failed Reconstruction and the Jim Crow years. Without this historical knowledge, the energy and persistency of the movement wouldn't have existed and the gains of the era would not have been achieved. This level of historical knowledge generating activism needs to carry over to our youth of today and inform movements such as Black Lives Matter. Knowledge empowers us all.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and support of this legislation, which I believe will be a benefit all students and residents of the state of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Kevin Gough and Paula Jones in cursive script.

Kevin Gough & Paula Jones