

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

My name is Rachel Liu-Ballard. I am a parent from Hamden, CT and I am a member of Hamden Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Group which is a group of parentings working towards racial equity in the Hamden public school system. I support Bill7082 with SEJ's amendments. This bill is important to me because as a white mother with a two white children and one black child it is essential for *all* of them to know accurate American history. This is history that I didn't learn until I was in my 20s. Being raised in the color blind generation, race was not something that was often talked about amongst my white community. If we learned anything in school it was about broad historical accounts of the enslavement of African people and then the civil rights movement during Black History month. This left and incomplete story and gave the notion that all of ramifications of slavery, Jim Crow, etc was behind us. I want more than that for my own children and for the children of CT. We can't begin to heal and move forward as a country until we have done the profoundly important work of reckoning with our past and learning our history. People's lives, my son's life, literally depends on it.

Our parent group is pushing for there to be restorative justice practices and an admin, teacher, parent and student oversight of disproportionate discipline against children of color, anti-racism training for our teachers and a more inclusive curriculum, but this change will be slow if we rely on community by community to ask for the change. State leadership in supporting the SEJ amendments including a focus on the history of race and racism in the United States, anti-bias training for social studies teachers and the creation of a state curriculum building committee are essential steps if we are to meaningfully engage with inequalities in our state and raise our children to work to make them better.

I support what the writers of the bill are calling for:

1. The bill to require The History of Race and The History of Racism in the United States in the CT curriculum
2. Required racial bias trainings for social studies teachers and administrators
3. the creation of a curriculum-building Committee within the State Dept of Ed that would include teachers, experts on critical race theory, and students

Why include The History of Race and The History of Racism in the United States?

Including this additional content will help students learn:

1. African American history = American history
2. The history of the creation of the concepts of "race," whiteness, and anti-Blackness
3. The role racism played in the formation of the United States
4. about their ethnicities and countries of origin, and how their ethnicities came to fit in the American conception of race

AND will help us ensure that the delivery of the content is effective, high-quality, and consistent with the vision of the law and the needs of our constituents.

This bill is vital to the conversation of race and the analysis to dismantle systems of oppression.

Thank you for your time,

Rachel Liu