

Testimony HB 7082

From our Treasurer

To the distinguished members of the committee:

My name is Dr. Tina M. Manus, and I request your support of HB 7082 which supports African-American Studies in all schools. I am an educator with over 20 years of experience across many different schools in CT, many with diverse student bodies, and some without. It is imperative that this legislation is passed to ensure proper representation of all people in our public school curriculum.

It is no secret that our schools lack diverse teaching staff and that recruiting minority teachers had remained an issue of significant concern in CT for decades. This legislation ensures that schools, regardless of the backgrounds of their teaching staff or the community they are in, are required to provide a free and appropriate education that includes the study of African-Americans.

This legislation has the potential to transform teacher training programs, in addition to ensuring that those who built America with their stolen labor, are represented properly in the curriculum presented to all CT students. By establishing a mandate, we draw attention to a sometimes forgotten, but more often strategically silenced, African-American population.

As an educator and the Greater Bridgeport NAACP Education Chairwoman, I strongly urge you to support the swift passage of this necessary bill. As we continue to build empathy and understanding of all perspectives that encompass what we define as our American Identity in classrooms across CT, we must also pay homage to African-Americans who helped lay the foundation of what we know as the American experience.