

March 5, 2018

My name is Tiffani McGinnis and I am submitting written testimony in support of **House Bill 7082 An Act Concerning the Inclusion of African American Studies in the Public School Curriculum.**

I grew up in Tennessee and it was not until I attended an HBCU (Tennessee State University) that I was taught many things about the civil war. In High School I thought most great things in this country were done by white Americans (mostly white men). I had an experience as a white person that most white people never have, which is attending a school where only 10% of the enrolled students were white. I was lucky that I received an education that included information on race, African American leaders in our history and a view of that wasn't skewed to make white people look superior. It is imperative for all students in CT to have African American Studies included in their curriculum.

Almost every day we see young people doing and saying things that if properly educated they might not do. Would a young person think it was ok to post a picture of themselves in blackface if they were taught the origins of it? We can't say for sure but many white people are under the impression that the only way to be a racist is to use the n word. Systemic racism isn't a word you will hear in most public schools in CT. Our students need to learn about all of these things. Knowledge is power, knowledge is understanding. The more we know, the more compassionate we tend to become. I hope the committee will support to move this bill forward and I hope the legislature will vote it into law.

Thank you for your time,
Tiffani McGinnis