

March 2, 2019

Distinguished Chairs Sanchez and McCrory, and members of the Education Committee:

Please support Raised House Bill 7082, AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

It's been a long time since I was in school, and my children are now in college and focused on things other than history. So I was appalled to learn that, even in 2019, almost no time is spent focused on teaching the history of African-Americans in this country, when in reality, *we would not even be a country without African-Americans*. I can't even quite picture what kids are being taught. How can you teach about the United States without focusing on African-Americans? Whose story is being told here?

Obviously, our racist history isn't over. If we continue to minimize the role of African-Americans it will seem as though they had little impact and will give the impression that an entire group of people is less-than. This perpetuates negative stereotypes and implicit biases. It allows the white-dominant perspective to be unchallenged. As we see over and over, this view can lead to dangerous outcomes.

By focusing studies on African-Americans we are simply trying to rebalance the lopsided views that have been perpetuated since school in this country began. It is vitally important work.

Also, in teaching a more clear-eyed view of history, let's make sure that the curriculum is informed by black scholars and reflects the African-American voices that are so often missing. White people cannot tell this story.

I strongly support HB 7082.

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