

Testimony in Support of **HB 7082**, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of African American Studies in the Public School Curriculum.

I am writing in support of HB 7082. Our country is in a new and painful phase of facing the racism woven into the very fabric of our culture, from its beginning. We must educate ourselves to the FACTS of racism in order to do the hard work of changing policies and hearts and understanding. And we must begin with the young. The fact that only one third of high school students know that the 13th Amendment ended slavery and that only 8% know that slavery was a leading reason for the secession of the South is pathetic. We owe it to our children to educate them to this reality and its history in order to prepare them to be aware and engaged citizens. We owe it to ourselves and each other to grapple with this painful part of our history and our present.

Please support this bill. Connecticut should join the other 13 states that have legislation supporting the increased inclusion of African American history in the Public School curriculum. Let's show our youth that we have the courage and stamina to grapple with this issue. With racism raising its ugly head throughout the land, we need to push back. This legislation is a critical part of that effort. The more we know about our past, the more we can change how we live it out in the present.

Thank you for your attention.

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