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

My name is Suzanne Roman and I live in Newtown. I am a member of the Racial Healing, Justice and Reconciliation Ministry in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut. I am writing in support of HB7082 with the amendments provided by Students for Educational Justice.

Education about the contributions of African Americans to U.S. society as well as about the stresses and discrimination they struggle against is greatly needed for all ages. The public schools are an appropriate place for that education.

Within the Episcopal Church in Connecticut we have seen that many people do not know the history of racism in the U.S. As a result, they are unable to recognize the workings of white privilege and bias against people of color in politics, business, education, religion, and day to day goings on.

That is why African American Studies is needed. But African American Studies, if not taught well, can cause more hurt than enlightenment. That is why I support the three amendments by Students for Educational Justice, namely that:

1. The bill requires teaching the history of race and the history of racism in the United States
2. Social studies teachers and administrators are required to have racial bias training
3. A curriculum-building committee within the State Department of Education is created that would include teachers, experts on critical race theory, and students

It is important to me as a long-time resident of Connecticut, as a Christian, and as an Episcopalian that we put renewed effort into learning about the racial history of the U.S. so we can right past wrongs and work together for a stronger future.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Roman