

Dear members of the Education Committee:

My name is Karell Rose. I live in South Windsor CT.

I write to express my support for HB 7082: An Act Concerning the Inclusion of African-American Studies in Public School Curriculum.

For far too long, the American history that has been taught in public schools has been incomplete and excluded the contributions of African Americans to the history, culture, and the financial wealth of the United States. In many instances, the only part of African American studies that is included in school curriculums is the story of slavery and the simplistic rendering of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement. Every student regardless of race and ethnicity would benefit from the inclusion of African American Studies in public school curriculum because they would be learning a more full and complete history of the United States with all its nuances. Such knowledge can better facilitate an understanding of the social and economic landscape that we now occupy. In order to move forward as a society, we need to fully understand our past and to come to terms with it. African Americans have been here since the inception of the United States and their contributions and voices in US history has largely been muted or ignored. As an adult, I am still learning about the contributions of African Americans. There is so much of the contributions of African Americans to our society that is not part of the public discourse or knowledge. As recently as last night, I learned about an African American doctor, Dr. Patricia Bath, who in 1986 invented the Laserphaco Probe. This is a device that literally helps to save people's sight by quickly and painlessly using a laser to dissolve cataracts in the eye, then irrigates and cleans the site to prepare it for a replacement lens. There are some many other instances of the ingenuity and resilience of African Americans that is unknown to the vast majority of our society. U.S. History is often taught without representing all the amazing and diverse voices that shaped it. HB 7082 would be a great step in the right direction of improving our social studies curriculum to be more complete and representative of our multicultural society and to facilitate culturally responsive pedagogy where it is applicable and very much needed.

Sincerely,
Karell Rose