

In SUPPORT of HB 7082: AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE PUBLIC-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, and members of the Education Committee:

I am writing **in support of HB 7082**, which would mandate the inclusion of African American studies in school social studies curriculums. It is crucial that all students have a reasonable breadth and depth of knowledge in this critical subject area.

Our country's historical use of slavery and slavery's foundational role in the civil war needs to be thoroughly taught. The long history of discrimination in housing, employment, educational opportunity, and criminal justice suffered by African-Americans needs to be presented, as well as the civil rights movement which has only begun to correct these injustices.

Without educating students in the depth (think lynching) and pervasiveness of the societal structures which oppressed African Americans, they are likely to de-prioritize the continuing need for laws such as affirmative action, criminal justice reform, and strong voting rights.

As a volunteer at one of the state's maximum-security prisons, I am acutely aware of the disproportionate number of imprisoned black men. As a former health care professional, I am acutely aware of the differential in the quality and availability of medical treatment for the African-American population. As an environmental advocate, I am acutely aware of the environmental injustice which leads to the siting of landfills, polluting waste treatment facilities, and industrial complexes in close proximity to minority populations. But those without current exposure to such inequities may be blind to them without attention being given to their historical roots.

One only need glance through the recent news - blackface, Charlotte riots, mass shootings in African American churches, "racists labels" being thrown back and forth among our politicians -to realize how crucial it is that in-depth study and conversation on African American history be part of our public-school curriculum.

Please support HB 7082. Thank you for your attention,

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