

Dear Members of the Education Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:
My name is Taylin Santiago. I am a student at New London High School and a member of Hearing Youth Voices in New London, Connecticut. I support Bill 7082 with Students for Educational Justice' amendments. As a biracial Afro-Latina, life gets a little tricky for me at times. Being both black and Puerto Rican, I know very little about either of my histories other than the fact that slavery and genocide were involved in both. This bill is important to me solely based on the fact that both of my histories as an African American and a latina in this country is just as important as the history of my white counterparts. Education is something that builds bridges. This class could help build a bridge of unity and understanding between those not part of the black or latinx communities. Ignorance comes from not being knowledgeable and the ignorance and prejudice I face in school could lessen or be taken away because of this class. Many students I go to school with don't know what it's like to go to bed hungry, many don't understand the fear of police regarding their safety, many don't understand being watched in the store just because you got a little melanin. Many students make statements and comments on their own prejudice based off of things they have no clue about. There are reasons that many black and people of color in this country live in poverty and struggle and it is even our fault because we are trying to live and work around a system not built for us. A class like this would and will be an eye opener for so many and spark a change and debate statewide that could fire up the change for the future of this country.