

My name is Ella McQuaid, I am from Fairfield Connecticut and currently attend the Ethel Walker School in Simsbury, CT. I am here today to urge the committee to support H.B. No. 6662 : *An ACT DESIGNATING RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS IN THE STATE AND ESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION ON RACIAL EQUITY IN PUBLIC HEALTH.*

As the committee might know, in 2018 13.8 percent of African Americans reported having fair or poor health compared to 8.3 percent of non-Hispanic whites. Along with that, there are 11 infant deaths per 1,000 live births among Black Americans. This is almost twice the national average of 5.8 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

While historically there has been a large gap in healthcare amongst differing parts of our population, this is especially critical due to COVID. People of color are being hit harder than any other group in the pandemic. 1 in 645 Black Americans has died, while only 1 in 825 White Americans has died. Improving health outcomes requires addressing these statistics. This has to be done through front line programs, but it also requires that we look at the systemic racism that has always been a part of our history and our healthcare system.

Exploring racism in public health doesn't just benefit people of color, it helps all of our society to be healthier as a whole, for this to happen, the unique needs of all members of society need to be understood.

In closing, I urge you to support H.B. No. 6662 An Act Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis and Establishing the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health.

Sources

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2020/05/07/484742/health-disparities-race-ethnicity/>

<https://www.apmresearchlab.org/covid/deaths-by-race>

<https://www.ichs.com/racism-as-a-public-health-crisis/>