

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Ohio Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee. My name is Emily Knowles and I'm submitting this testimony as an Ohio citizen (District 16) in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 14 (SCR 14) declaring that racism is a public health crisis.

Education, employment and safe housing are all predictive of a communities health and generations of inequality have led to large disparities in our state.

In Ohio:

- The infant mortality rate for a black infant is almost 3x that of white infants.
- The poverty rate for black children is 47% vs 16% for white children.
- African Americans make up 49.5% of the homeless population despite making up only 12% of the overall population.
- 67% of black students graduate high school (one of the lowest rates in the country).
- Black children and teens are five times as likely to die by gun violence as white children and teens.

While Ohio offers many opportunities, it's citizens do not have a level playing field and we must do better, now. I ask you to support SCR 14 as a step toward rooting out the systemic racism and bias in our State and working towards an Ohio where every child has a fair chance to succeed.