

I wish I could be presenting this testimony in person, but as I cannot, I still wish to make my voice heard regarding this important matter.

I feel it is intellectually dishonest and morally unjust to continue to ignore that racism underlies the primary health issues that affect our communities of color. In public health, we learn first about social determinants of health. It is clear in studying these social determinants that a line can be drawn directly to racism.

As a nurse, it is impossible for me to see patients with hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and other chronic diseases that plague the Black community and other communities of color, and expect improvements in their health, when their socioeconomic status, environment, and the way they are treated by society because of their skin color does not improve. Simply put, if you keep changing the filter, but the well is poisoned, people will continue to get sick.

Nurses are not able to tackle these issues on our own. We need the assistance of elected officials who represent us to put in place legislation and garner funding that will begin to address and mitigate these injustices.

SCR 14, declaring racism is a public health crisis, should be adopted immediately, for the safety and health of our communities across Ohio. Thank you for your time.