

Last week, Senator Williams and Senator Craig introduced SCR 14 to declare racism a public health crisis in Ohio. As a caucasian man, I am ashamed of the behavior of the police vis-a-vis people of color. In my opinion, racism is most definitely a health crisis that is having major impacts on residents of our great state.

First of all, allow me to state the obvious: When the police murder and abuse black people as we have all seen many times over the last week, that constitutes a health emergency especially for the citizens on the other end of the police brutality. This is real and the lives of real people are being harmed and some are losing their lives. Unfortunately, we are not immune to police excessive force and brutality in Ohio.

Unfortunately, people of color are also suffering from COVID-19 at much higher rates than white people. This is a complex issue but readily available access to health care drives this fact. Black people who live in poorer areas have less access to doctors, are more likely to work at “essential” jobs and many are scared to advocate for themselves because they fear the police and that is a justified fear.

These inequalities and injustices warrant our state government treating police brutality and systemic racism as a health emergency.

With urgency,
Steven Hamric