



SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14
PROPONENT TESTIMONY

June 8, 2020

Dear Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Huffman, and members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee,

I write in support of S.C.R. 14 (Craig, Williams). S.C.R 14 is an important statement recognizing pervasive and severe effects of racism on the health and social determinants of health in our communities. This initial recognition, and the call for a racial equity working group, can provide a strong foundation for consistently addressing and correcting this problem going forward. Concretely, the action steps S.C.R. 14 addresses are to:

- 1.) Systematically collect data across the state for this defined purpose;
- 2.) Determine correlations throughout outcomes;
- 3.) Create data-based interventions and evaluate outcomes.

Ohio and the General Assembly have in recent years taken good but isolated steps towards inclusion of race based health disparities in policy making in the areas of infant mortality and Medicaid expansion. This resolution is a logical next step because it recognizes that racism is a major facet of the social determinants of health and expresses a commitment to review all actions of the Ohio General Assembly with a racial equity lens. There are clear data and research to show that racism is a crisis impacting all factors that shape our health –including education, housing, and the criminal justice system.¹

As both a board member of the Health Policy Institute of Ohio and Franklin County Auditor, I am committed to evaluating and correcting the impacts of racism in housing, specifically the effects of red-lining in communities that we still see today.

In this work I join with Franklin County Commissioners who have already passed a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis. As noted in their resolution²:

- Racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment and criminal justice; and an emerging body of research demonstrates that racism itself is a social determinant of health;

¹See Health Policy Institute of Ohio May 2020 report

<https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/hpio-statement-on-racism-and-health/>

² See Franklin County Commissioners Resolution No. 0341-20

https://crms.franklincountyohio.gov/RMSWeb/pdfs/68145.FINAL_Resolution_FCPH_DeclaredRacismPublicHealthCrisis.pdf



FRANKLIN COUNTY AUDITOR MICHAEL STINZIANO

373 South High Street | 21st Floor | Columbus, Ohio 43215

T (614) 525.HOME | C (614) 219.9224 | auditorstinziano@franklincountyohio.gov | franklincountyauditor.com

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- Racism and segregation in Ohio and Franklin County have furthered a health divide resulting in Black residents having lower life expectancies than White residents; being far more likely than other races to die prematurely (before the age of 75).

The Franklin County Rise Together Blueprint³ noted Franklin County's African American residents experience dramatically higher unemployment rates (Overall: 5.7%, African-Americans: 11.1%), face a higher poverty rate as a community (Overall: 16.7%, African-Americans: 29.9%), and have lower home ownership rates (Overall: 53.6%, African-Americans: 33.4%), and are more likely to live in neighborhoods with low performing schools and experience disproportionately higher incarceration rates (Overall: 223 per 100,000, African-Americans: 637 per 100,000).

These are unacceptable outcomes. I commend Franklin County leadership for taking the first steps towards addressing racism as a public health crisis and urge the General Assembly to do the same.

I look forward to seeing the Committee's and the Senate's future work on this important issue and stand ready to provide any support possible. Never hesitate to reach me directly at AuditorStinziano@franklincountyohio.gov or 614-525-5700.

Sincerely,



Michael Stinziano
Franklin County Auditor

³ See Franklin County Rise Together Blueprint
<https://commissioners.franklincountyohio.gov/COMM-website>