

NAACP

Cleveland Branch

June 12, 2023

Subject: Proponent Testimony for the CROWN Act

House Civil Justice Committee:

Chair Hillyer, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Galonski, I am the President of the Cleveland NAACP and I am writing to express my support for the passage of the Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act, better known as the CROWN Act. The CROWN Act addresses a critical issue that has plagued our society for far too long: discrimination based on natural hairstyles, primarily targeting individuals with Afro-textured hair.

The historic and cultural significance of natural hair cannot be overstated. In the Black community, our hair is not just a feature of our physical appearance, it is an integral part of our identity, heritage, and self-expression. Unfortunately, people who wear natural hairstyles, such as braids, twists, locks, or Afros, often face discrimination in educational institutions, workplaces, and public accommodations. Our hair is called messy, unkept, and unprofessional despite the countless time and money that we spend on it.

I have my own story about relinquishing harmful relaxing chemicals on my hair while starting law school in a new state without a hair stylist. The pressure of being a first-year law student while trying to learn to manage and love my new hair and texture was tiresome.

Passage of the CROWN Act would have a profound impact on innumerable lives. It would provide people with the assurance that they can embrace their natural hair and cultural heritage without compromising their professional or educational opportunities. It would send a powerful message that diversity and inclusivity are not just ideals we strive for, but rights we protect and cherish. This legislation not only promotes equality but also fosters a more inclusive and respectful society.

It is our duty to create an environment that celebrates diversity and ensures equal treatment for all. By supporting the CROWN Act, we are taking a significant step towards achieving this goal.

In conclusion, I urge you to wholeheartedly support and advocate for the passage of the CROWN Act. Let us join forces to combat hair discrimination and create a society where everyone, regardless of their natural hair texture or style, is treated with dignity, respect, and equality.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

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Thank you for your attention to this matter, I appreciate your dedication to promoting fairness and justice. I look forward to seeing the positive impact of the CROWN Act in our community and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

Kayla S Griffin, Esq.
President

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Chartered in Cleveland in 1912, the Cleveland Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), is a branch of the National Association. Founded in 1909, the NAACP is a membership based civil rights organization. The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. Learn more at clevelandnaacp.org