

June 20, 2023

The Honorable Brett Hillyer  
Chair, House Civil Justice Committee  
77 S. High Street, 11<sup>th</sup> floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

**RE: Support for Ohio House Bill 178**

Dear Chairman Hillyer and members of the House Civil Justice Committee,

On behalf of Walmart, I write in support of House Bill 178. This important legislation specifies that “race” includes traits associated with an individual’s race, including hair texture and protective hair styles, such as braids, locks, and twists. Thus, the bill makes it an unlawful discriminatory practice under the Civil Rights Law to discriminate against an individual because of traits associated with the individual’s race, including hair texture and protective hair styles, in employment, places of public accommodation, housing, and credit practices. We applaud Representatives Brent and Callender for introducing this legislation and we strongly urge its passage.

Walmart employs nearly 1.6 million people in the U.S. and 2.2 million associates worldwide, offering career opportunities with a focus on creating a more diverse team at every level.<sup>1</sup> Representation matters, and we embrace inclusive recruitment practices and diverse hiring slates to enable access to growth opportunities and ensure our promotional, pay and hiring processes are fair and equitable. Our core value of “Respect for the Individual” reflects our commitment to [diversity, equity and inclusion](#) (DEI) as a foundational focus for our business.<sup>2</sup> We aim to play a constructive, nonpartisan role to pursue policy outcomes that help our customers, associates, and the communities we serve live better.

Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are using business and philanthropic resources to address drivers of systemic disparities in society (e.g., food insecurity, Veteran’s employment, women’s economic empowerment), seeking to contribute to a collective movement to advance equity for

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<sup>1</sup> FY22 Culture, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Mid-Year Report: <https://corporate.walmart.com/media-library/document/better-together-cdei-fiscal-year-2022-mid-year-report/proxyDocument?id=0000017c-0f42-da02-a37d-9f6fea510000>

<sup>2</sup> Equity & Inclusion at Walmart and Beyond: <https://corporate.walmart.com/esgreport/esg-issues/diversity-equity-inclusion>



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all. In June 2020, our CEO announced our aim to advance racial equity in our nation's criminal justice, education, financial and health systems – with a philanthropic commitment of \$100 million over five years through the [Walmart.org Center for Racial Equity](https://www.walmart.org/center-for-racial-equity). There are no simple answers to the questions and challenges we face; however, we know we are stronger as a company and a country when people are heard, included, and empowered to live better.

We support efforts that promote greater equity and shared value in our business, our associates, our customers, and across society, and believe that House Bill 178 is an important part of advancing these goals.

We thank you for your consideration, and we welcome any opportunity to discuss the bill and Walmart's commitment to racial equity. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rachael Carl".

**Rachael Carl**

Director, Public & Government Affairs  
Walmart, Inc.