



66 East Lynn Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Ohio Senate Health, Human Services, Medicaid Committee

Chairman David Burke

Vice Chair Huffman

Ranking Member Nickie Antonio

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Senate Concurrent Resolution 14 (Craig & Williams) of the 133rd General Assembly

Proponent Testimony Provided by:

Derrick R. Clay, CEO of New Visions Group LLC

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and other members of the Ohio Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify as a proponent for Senate Concurrent Resolution 14.

My name is Derrick R. Clay, and I am the CEO and Owner of New Visions Group LLC. New Visions Group is the oldest minority-owned state-wide lobbying firm in the state of Ohio. NVG was founded in 1996 by the late Ed Hogan, as many of you know. Mr. Hogan started NVG after realizing the disparity in access to government for black-owned and minority businesses in Ohio. NVG's core focus is to address the disparity and connect a marginalized section of our community to our government. Today, NVG is a full-service government relations and lobbying firm that has been connecting business to government for over two decades. Offering services in strategic political counsel, business development, lobbying, and government relations, NVG represents a cross section of businesses in energy, telecom, healthcare, transportation, tourism, engineering, development, and technology. NVG has served as an industry leader to several public and private corporations both locally and nationally.



66 East Lynn Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

In addition to my day to day duties as CEO of NVG, I am also the Chair of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Foundation. The OLBC Foundation's goal is to be the pre-eminent hub for non-partisan analysis of the impact of public policy on Ohio's African American communities. The priorities of the Foundation include policies and issues ranging from education, health care, minority business enterprises, and job creation.

Recently, the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Foundation and the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron conducted a first-of-its-kind, joint statewide poll of Black adult voters and non-voters in Ohio. The poll included a random sample of 1,500 Black adults in Ohio, that went into the field in December 2019 and January 2020, that included a wide range of issues such as healthcare, jobs, education, gun safety and the environment. Some of the key findings of the poll were:

- 75% of all Black Ohioians surveyed believe that Police Officers are deployed in some neighborhoods with more effectiveness than in others.
- Another point was, nearly 60% of all Black Ohioians surveyed feel though even if they do work hard, they still may not get ahead in life.

A lot of work remains to be done however, the OLBC Foundation is working towards plans to convene community leaders, public policy experts and leading public policy analysts at our Annual Conference on June 25, 2020.

In addition to my role with the OLBC Foundation, I also serve as a member of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce Board, its Executive Committee and Chair of the Government Affairs Steering Committee. I am also a Commissioner with the City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Commission.



66 East Lynn Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Lastly, I am co-owner of The Lifestyle Cafe. The Lifestyle Cafe is black-owned, plant based, 100% vegan restaurant in the Olde Towne East neighborhood of Columbus. The cafe provides the community a healthy alternative to the surrounding fast food chains in the area.

I wear many hats, however, today I am here on behalf of our current and future community leaders and members, to testify in support of SCR 14, as introduced.

As a businessman, community leader and father, I believe that Ohio must do more to eradicate racism for our current and future generations. Declaring racism as a public health crisis is more than just a vote on this resolution. It is a statement you personally care about the health and well being of every Ohioan. Ohio and our nation has failed to address systemic racism that affects all aspects of black, brown and other minority communities. Ohio, as the country has seen, has been a proven leader when fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic. The actions by this Governor and this Administration saved thousands of lives by acting quickly and swiftly towards the unseen enemy---COVID-19. Racism too is an unseen enemy that is causing countless damage not only to people of color, but all Ohioans. This state must show the same enthusiasm and vigor it did for COVID-19, as for the much bigger plague on our society---racism. Racism is not only a public health crisis, it is an economic one as well. If you need an example walk outside the Statehouse look around and then make your way north up High Street. Every single business is boarded up. Because of racism, business now pays the cost. By declaring racism as a public health crisis, Ohio will begin the healing process.

Having experienced various different forms of racism throughout my own life, I recognize the challenges of skin color in all aspects of our society, including healthcare, education, business, and the law. I have used my platform to advance and advocate for black communities and other communities of color in both government and business sectors throughout my career. I have seen and felt the disparities brought about by systemic racism throughout all of Ohio and our



66 East Lynn Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

nation, and I recognize that this is an issue that has gone on for too long and needs to be addressed immediately. Furthermore, as a father of teenage kids, I am constantly concerned about their well being and the type of world they will be entering. The tragic death of George Floyd ignited the flame that has been existing for decades. Police brutality and racial injustice is a real issue in our state and our nation. Ohio cannot and will not be a leader in our nation in the post COVID-19 world without addressing the issue of systemic racism and all the issues that stem from it. I urge the committee to listen to all of the testimonies on SCR 14 and understand the plague of injustice that has happened for generations in Ohio.

On Monday, June 1, 2020, New Visions Group sent a statement to Governor Mike DeWine, Lieutenant Governor John Husted, Attorney General Dave Yost, Senate President Larry Obhof, Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko, House Speaker Larry Householder, House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes and Ohio Legislative Black Caucus President Representative Stephanie Howse, calling on Governor DeWine, Ohio Attorney General Yost and the Ohio General Assembly to Develop a Task Force to Immediately Address Systemic Racism and Police Brutality in the State of Ohio. The statement is provided below with this testimony.

New Visions Group urges you to vote Yes on Senate Concurrent Resolution 14, Declare racism a public health crisis and promote racial equality, as it is currently written. Lets again be a leader for the nation...



66 East Lynn Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Attached Statement from New Visions Group to Governor Mike DeWine, Lieutenant Governor John Husted, Attorney General Dave Yost, Senate President Larry Obhof, Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko, House Speaker Larry Householder, House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes and Ohio Legislative Black Caucus President Representative Stephanie Howse.

June 1, 2020
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Visions Group LLC Calls on Governor DeWine, Ohio Attorney General Yost and the Ohio General Assembly to Develop a Task Force to Immediately Address Systemic Racism and Police Brutality in the State of Ohio.

Over the last few weeks, systemic racism and police brutality against black, brown, and other minority communities have been brought back to national attention. With the most recent protests in Columbus and other cities across the country, it is obvious that the state of Ohio needs to take action in finding solutions to begin healing our communities. Ohio is a proven leader nationally and must continue to be so in addressing these critical issues that have been plaguing our communities for generations.

New Visions Group calls on our Elected leaders to develop and implement a task force on or before July 1, 2020 to finally address the disease of systemic racism and police brutality in an extensive and holistic manner. Ohio's elected leaders must work together, across party lines, to protect and assist all black, brown and other minority communities.

This task force needs to address the following issues:

- Systematic Racism within every level of society and in our communities
- Police Brutality and lack of bias training
- Understanding the racial disparities with Stand-Your-Ground laws and other Castle Doctrine laws
- The inconsistency in official reactions to protests throughout Ohio, based on the subject matter and participants of the protest

The task force must complete the following:

- Must be formed on or before July 1, 2020
- Must have monthly press conferences for the first 6 months after the formation of the task force
- Must provide monthly reports to the public on actions implemented
- Must take expert and public opinion into account

- Must work with community leaders and organizations who are currently working to end systemic racism and police brutality

The Governor and the Ohio Department of Health must declare Systemic Racism as a public health crisis immediately. Franklin County, Ohio, has led the way by declaring racism as a public health crisis this past week. Systemic Racism has brought generations of Ohioans and Americans both emotional and physical trauma. This trauma affects all aspects of black, brown and other minority communities. New Visions Group believes that this is not only a public health issue but an economic one as well. Ohio cannot be the leader that it is expected to be in this great nation or to have a healthy economy without protecting all Ohioans.

The state of Ohio also must act on the following:

Emergency Services

- To assist the General Assembly in creating laws that address systemic racism, police brutality and addressing the issues that stem from racism.
- To publicly denounce all acts of police brutality and create a readily accessible database for the entire state that provides facts, maps the violence, and assists in finding ways to address it.
- To require all sheriffs, all police departments, all highway patrol, and other law enforcement to have training on non-lethal force tactics, de-escalation skills and systemic racism. The state must provide all law enforcement the financial means to implement non-lethal force tactics. Law enforcement shall also then prioritize training and use of these peaceful tactics.
- To require all law enforcement, fire, first responders, and their corresponding unions to go through mandatory racial sensitivity training on a bi-annual basis to be administered by an outside third party and approved by the community through mandatory public comment periods.
- To require all law enforcement personnel to wear body cameras at all times while on active duty, with the body camera footage being public record and accessible to all in Ohio.
- To support diversion court programs, re-entry certifications and other rehabilitative features that reduce recidivism and the prison industrial complex pipeline cycle.
- To provide emergency relief, mental and financial assistance to victims of police brutality and their families, preventing them the further indignation of an expensive and drawn-out legal battle for immediate basic supportive measures.

Healthcare

- To announce Systemic Racism as a public health emergency.

- To require all health care professionals at all levels and providers to go through mandatory racial sensitivity training on a bi-annually basis to be administered by an outside third party and approved by the community through mandatory public comment periods.
- Provide mental health programs and assistance to communities that are most affected by systemic racism and police brutality.
- To create programs, funding and assistance to provide access to healthy food options and the cooking skills and resources required to prepare fresh food in the hundreds of food deserts across rural and urban Ohio.

Education

- To require all Ohio K-12 publicly funded schools to teach and educate students, in an age-appropriate way, about systemic racism, and provide students who are victims of racism support and assistance. Furthermore, include greater support and resources to educate and recruit diverse educators and administrators in these schools.
- To support greater access to higher education programs, non-traditional education outlets and certification programs, addressing major issues such as costs, flexible scheduling and earned experience credits.
- To support and fund more internship, mentoring, co-op and apprentice programs, allowing for the discovery of more opportunity in career choice in all fields, but especially in those within STEM.

Elections and Voting Rights

- To support greater access to voting, allowing for the ability to fully participate in the democratic process, translating to a more equal distribution of political power.
- To eliminate voter suppression and disenfranchisement policies such as reduced early access to voting, reduced polling locations and/or strategic placement of polling locations in areas/buildings known for racial discrimination or bias, felony disenfranchisement, especially that stemming from the war on drugs and school-to-prison pipeline, voter purge laws and actions and strict voter ID laws. All of which need addressed despite the recent deluge of Supreme Court rulings allowing otherwise. Ohio leadership must do what is morally right and not just what is legally permissible.
- To support greater redistricting oversight from members of black, brown and other minority communities through greater public input and open comment periods throughout the entire redistricting process.
- To appointment more minorities to high-ranking cabinet and department positions of leadership throughout all levels of government.
- To implement and fund automatic voter registration.



66 East Lynn Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Financial

- To provide broad access to capital and strict financial penalties for hidden racial bias in lending and housing programs.
- To work with all businesses on increasing employment opportunities for black, brown and other people of color.
- To address the racial wealth gap through greater access to wealth creation or wealth creation initiatives supporting increased homeownership and additional access to traditional wealth-building practices, including investments and savings programs.
- To provide greater access to capital for minority business start-ups initially and through their first five (5) years of business, supporting long-term growth and potential expansion.
- To address education gaps by further incentivizing savings programs for post-secondary education and broadening the qualifying institutions to align with those outlined above.

Housing

- To address housing disparities and re-evaluate eviction practices and renter protections.
- To address the negative and displacing effects of both gentrification programs and subsidized development on communities of black, brown, and other people of color.
- To prohibit and remove all racial segregation and discriminatory language from all Ohio neighborhood, municipal, and community laws, bi-laws, ordinances, and rules.
- To fund and support community and neighborhood revitalization programs, organizations, and special improvement districts.
- To provide and fund broadband access to all Ohio communities and residents.

Racism is America's underlying chronic, terminal disease. It has infiltrated not just our economic and social systems but our everyday behaviors. Police brutality is all too familiar in our society, but we will remain resilient. If this is not addressed it will continue to tear at the moral fabric of our society forever.

The time for talk is over. Action must be taken now by our leaders to address these inequalities.

New Visions Group LLC is a full-service government relations and lobbying firm based in Columbus, Ohio that has been connecting business to government for over two decades. Offering services in strategic political counsel, business development, lobbying, and government relations, NVG has served as an industry leader to several public and private corporations both locally and nationally.

<http://newvisionsgroup.com/>



66 East Lynn Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

NEW VISIONS GROUP
