

I prayed for twenty years but received no answer until I prayed with my legs. - Frederick Douglas

Thank you Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Ohio Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee. My name is Keizayla Fambro and I am here to testify in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 14 declaring that racism is a public health crisis.

Today, I stand here amplifying the voices of my people, standing tall on the shoulders of those who are marching and protesting daily in the streets. Over the past two weeks we have seen protest not only across our nation but the world. What needs to be understood is this is bigger than George Floyd. This is about **Black Health**, COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the inequities within America. As black people are a greater risk in dying from the effects of COVID-19. This is about **Black Wealth**, Black people makeup somewhere between 13-16% of America, but make up only 2% of America's wealth. This is about **Black Maternity**. This is about **black children**. **Black souls** being gunned down by police. You can search the hashtag black lives matter to see the faces attached. It's about **institutional racism and policies** that are meant to keep a noose or a knee around black people's necks. **Black education**.

If we are going to address structural racism, the first thing we have to be clear about what it is and how it operates. For example not only improving inadequate housing in which black people live, but by increasing access to education, job opportunities and health services.

If we are not clear about how structural racism shows up, it will be like treating a brain tumor with tylenol. It will work in the short term but eventually manifest itself in ways that are harder to treat. I believe this resolution is the first step in freeing my people until we are free. That's structurally, mentally, emotionally and physically.

I would like to thank the committee for amplifying the voices of black people and to Senator Williams and Craig for their courageous sponsorships. I encourage the Senate to move fast during this process, so the House can take a vote and Governor Dewine signs.

In closing I leave you with the words of Angela Davis who says, "In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist. We **MUST** be anti-racist". I am open for questions.

Thank you.