

Attn: Health, Human Service and Medicaid Committee.

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Witness Form

Testimony Written and Verbal

Testimony as an interested party/citizen of Ohio. Proponent in support of Racism is a public health crisis. Not a registered lobbyist. Bill SCR14

My name is Sarah Hawley, I am a public school administrator in the state of Ohio. I am providing testimony in support of SCR No. 14.

As a public school educator for the last 20 years, it is inherently apparent that there is a need to identify racism as a public health crisis. Developing a committee to explicitly focus on intervening on this crisis is long past due. As an educator, I daily observe the effects of racism on the physical, mental, and emotional health of children and their families.

The design of the public school system in the state of Ohio, like many states, is grounded in systematic racism. Largely in part by the way that public schools are funded. As a result of redlining, public schools accessible to African Americans and other people of color is often limited to the most crowded, underfunded, and lowest performing schools. Limiting housing availability for people of color forces them to less desirable areas often impacted with negative environmental factors, distanced from medical offices, hospitals, and mental health resources. Creating entire communities poverty

A committee dedicated to identifying and removing the racists systems in place that prohibit many people of color from obtaining the healthcare they need and focusing specifically on creating anti-racist policies, procedures, and process is essential to changing the narrative for people of color in Ohio. Ohio has an opportunity right now to take leadership in changing the future of America.

As stated in the legislature being introduced, "The American Psychological Association says that, because of poverty and discrimination, racial minority children are more likely to experience traumatic events than white children, and that childhood trauma has negative impacts on academic, behavioral, and physical health outcomes." Yet, these children being most highly impacted often attend schools with limited to no medical or mental health services.

Respectfully,
Sarah A. Hawley
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