



Written Testimony on SCR 14
Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee
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Chair Burke, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address this Committee regarding the GCP's support for SCR 14.

With more than 12,000 members, the GCP is the largest metropolitan chamber of commerce in the state. We are focused on driving the economic vitality of our region through building a strong and thriving climate for the broad business community, including small businesses, middle-market companies, and large corporations. Our work encompasses a commitment to address inequalities that hinder economic growth. Addressing systemic racism is essential.

Most recently, the GCP board voted in full support of declaring racism a public health crisis and to establish a working group to promote racial equity at the local level. While our community has for decades worked to address each individual challenge before it, the GCP understands there is still so much work to be done. Rarely has our community named the systemic cause of many of these challenges and it is far past the time to do that. Racism is real and is harming all people in our community. It is a detriment to our state, and we have a collective responsibility to facilitate change.

GCP believes that the business community has an important role to play in this work, which is why our organization is voicing support to declare racism a public health crisis. Much like Cleveland's local legislation, SCR 14 can enable and empower us to take this issue head on. It can provide a platform rooted in meaningful, action-oriented policy work that can initiate substantive care and sustainable change, beginning at a governmental level and then cascading throughout our community.



In our strategic plan, ForwardCLE, we asked how we might shape the future of diversity and inclusion efforts to drive more economic impact. SCR 14 is a step. The resolution would prioritize promoting racially-equitable economic and workforce development practices, an effort GCP has long-supported through our Equity & Inclusion division. Since 2001, the GCP Equity & Inclusion division has worked to close the racial disparities in jobs, income, and wealth by growing businesses owned by people of color and increasing workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We are grateful to the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus and others for its work and believe that SCR 14 is a critical first step to addressing racism in Ohio. Ultimately, the GCP's support for this resolution—and the important work of the GCP Equity & Inclusion division—is fueled by the belief that businesses and the region are stronger with greater opportunity for all.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our priorities. We will continue to engage with you in this critical endeavor.