



**Treasurer Pro Tem Gabe Crenshaw
Cleveland Height -University Heights School District**

Testimony – House Bill 178

Chair Hillyer, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and the members of the Civil Justice Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 178 known as the “Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (C.R.O.W.N.) Act”.

My name is Gabe Crenshaw and I serve on the Cleveland Hts/University Hts School board. I am submitting testimony for this committee to pass House Bill178

Some sad hair discrimination facts

- Some school districts have banned specific Black hairstyles, preventing students from attending school events like prom, extracurriculars and sports activities, and even graduation.
- 53% of young people surveyed, young girls in particular, identify that hair discrimination started as early as 5
- 80% of girls, in predominantly white institutions particularly, are experiencing hair discrimination by the time they're teenagers.

Ohio still has no protections against race-based hair discrimination. Black Hair continues to be seen as unprofessional and unkempt in its natural state. We are allowing undue punishment, social pressure and shame to students.

Natural hair is a part a person racial identity and an expression of their culture and heritage. Black and Brown Ohioans should be able to wear their hair in their natural forms without retribution form their school. Ohio cannot continue to fight for highly skilled talents without creating a welcoming place for the students of today to want to stay in.

The C.R.O.W.N. Act is meant to add the needed protections against for our students to maintain their sense of self and culture within the schools that are

meant to develop them as well as add in protections against employment discrimination.

As mom of three, regardless of where my kids go to college, I do not want Ohio to be taken off the table because the CROWN Act did not pass. Members of Civil Justice please vote YES for the CROWN Act our students depend on it .