

As Introduced

**134th General Assembly
Regular Session
2021-2022**

S. C. R. No. 4

Senators Craig, Williams

Cosponsors: Senators Maharath, Thomas, Sykes, Kunze, Antonio, Fedor, Yuko

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To declare racism a public health crisis and to ask the 1
Governor to establish a working group to promote racial 2
equity in Ohio. 3

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF OHIO (THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING):

WHEREAS, The American Medical Association states that 4
racism contributes to health inequities in the United States; 5
and 6

WHEREAS, Social determinants of health - the social and 7
material factors that influence health outcomes - have a 8
lifelong impact beginning even before birth; and 9

WHEREAS, The American Public Health Association (APHA) has 10
expressed that racism is a driving force of the social 11
determinants of health due to the resulting inequalities in a 12
number of matters, including housing, education, and employment; 13
and 14

WHEREAS, The APHA clarifies that racism is a social system 15
with multiple dimensions: individual racism is internalized or 16
interpersonal; systemic racism is institutional or structural, 17
and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value 18
based on the social interpretation of how one looks. This system 19

unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, 20
while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and 21
communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through 22
the waste of human resources; and 23

WHEREAS, Almost all of the four hundred years of Black 24
Americans' experience was under slavery and Jim Crow laws, which 25
subjected Black people to hardship and disadvantage in all areas 26
of life; and 27

WHEREAS, The Health Policy Institute of Ohio (HPIO) 28
explains that negative repercussions of historical racism, 29
including but not limited to discriminatory lending practices of 30
the twentieth century known as "redlining," impact current 31
outcomes regarding access to nutritious food, economic security, 32
educational achievement, and infant mortality; and 33

WHEREAS, The American Anthropological Association asserts 34
that genetic analyses show race to be a social construct not 35
rooted in meaningful biological difference; and 36

WHEREAS, There is clear data that racism negatively impacts 37
the lives of people of color in Ohio; and 38

WHEREAS, The American Psychological Association says that, 39
because of poverty and discrimination, racial minority children 40
are more likely to experience traumatic events than white 41
children, and that childhood trauma has negative impacts on 42
academic, behavioral, and physical health outcomes; and 43

WHEREAS, Statistics compiled by the Centers for Disease 44
Control show a national disparity between Black and white infant 45
mortality rates, and the State of Ohio has one of the highest 46
Black infant mortality rates; and 47

WHEREAS, Data collected by the Ohio Department of Health 48
reveal that maternal mortality is two and a half times greater 49
for Black women in Ohio than white women and that Black women 50

are significantly more likely to experience severe maternal morbidity, which includes unexpected outcomes of pregnancy, labor, or delivery that result in significant short- or long-term consequences to a woman's health; and

WHEREAS, The Urban Institute reports that fifty-six per cent of youth incarcerated in Ohio are Black, despite representing only sixteen per cent of people in Ohio under the age of eighteen; and

WHEREAS, The Ohio Poverty Report published by the Ohio Development Services Agency shows that the poverty rate for Black Ohioans is more than twice the poverty rate for white Ohioans, and the median income for Black households is only sixty per cent of the statewide median; and

WHEREAS, Ohio Department of Health data indicate that Black Ohioans have higher mortality rates for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer compared to other racial groups; and

WHEREAS, The HPIO reports that life expectancy for Black Ohioans is almost four years below the life expectancy for Ohioans as a whole; and

WHEREAS, The APHA has identified law enforcement violence as a public health issue that disproportionately affects marginalized groups, including people of color, impacting both physical and mental health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, The impact of racism on public health deserves action from all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly supports the establishment of a working group to address these issues and to: create a publicly accessible glossary of terms and definitions concerning racism and health equity; promote community engagement and provide tools for government agencies to engage actively and authentically with communities of color; continue to work to

build alliances with organizations that have a legacy and track 82
record of confronting racism; encourage community partners and 83
stakeholders in the education, employment, housing, and criminal 84
justice and safety arenas to recognize racism as a public health 85
crisis and take appropriate action; continue to promote racially 86
equitable economic and workforce development in Ohio; continue 87
to promote racially equitable hiring and promotion of all 88
employees including state employees; provide training to all 89
elected officials, staff, funders, and grantees on workplace 90
biases and how to mitigate them; promote and encourage all 91
policies that prioritize the health of people of color; support 92
local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance 93
efforts to dismantle systematic racism and mitigate exposure to 94
adverse childhood experiences and trauma; incorporate 95
educational efforts to address and dismantle racism and to 96
expand understanding of racism and how racism affects individual 97
and population health; and secure adequate resources to 98
successfully accomplish the aforementioned activities; now 99
therefore be it 100

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 134th General 101
Assembly of the State of Ohio, declare racism to be a public 102
health crisis affecting our entire state; and be it further 103

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 134th General 104
Assembly of the State of Ohio, ask the Governor to establish a 105
working group to promote racial equity throughout this state; 106
and be it further 107

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 134th General 108
Assembly of the State of Ohio, are committed to reviewing all 109
portions of the Revised Code with a racial equity lens; and be 110
it further 111

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 134th General 112
Assembly of the State of Ohio, are committed to conducting all 113

human resource, vendor selection, and grant management 114
activities with a racial equity lens, including reviewing all 115
internal policies and practices such as hiring, promotion, 116
leadership appointments, and funding; and be it further 117

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit duly 118
authenticated copies of this resolution to the Governor and news 119
media of Ohio. 120