

22 Montclair Drive  
West Hartford, CT 06107  
March 24, 2021

Appropriations Committee  
Connecticut State Legislature  
Hartford, CT

RE: H.B. 6662

Dear Senator Catherine A. Osten (Co-Chair), Representative Toni E. Walker (Co-Chair) and Members of the Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Eleta Jones and I live in West Hartford, Connecticut. I am writing to support H.B. No. 6662: An Act Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis and Establishing the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health.

Systemic and structural racism play a significant role in determining the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and affect people's access to quality housing, education, food, transportation, political power, and other social determinants of health. Racism has negative mental and physical health consequences such as depression, anxiety, asthma, hypertension, preterm birth, shortened life span and poor quality of life. Understanding and addressing racism from this public health perspective is crucial to eliminating racial and ethnic inequities and to improving opportunity and well-being across communities in Connecticut – especially for people of color.

To date, racism has been declared a public health crisis in 6 states, 182 municipalities, entities, and organizations, including 20 municipalities in Connecticut. We need your leadership on this issue and your support of this bill. People in our state, and particularly people in communities of color, need to know that we are taking significant steps to confront racism in our state.

I strongly urge that you support H.B. No. 6662. I also ask that this bill be amended to include a review and reform of the legislative process to improve public accessibility and establish mechanisms to determine the impact of proposed legislation on race.

Thank you,

*Eleta A. Jones*

Eleta A. Jones, Ph.D., LPC