



H.B. No. 6662: An Act Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis and Establishing the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health

Appropriations Committee
Monique Price-Taylor
March 26, 2021

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representative Dathan, Representative Nolan, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Monique Price-Taylor and I live in Vernon, Connecticut. I stand in support of H.B. No. 6662: An Act Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis and Establishing the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health. I serve as a Program Manager at the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), in which we aspire *"To advance solutions that use housing as a platform for services to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people, maximize public resources and build healthy communities."*

Declaring racism, a public health crisis as systemic racism is a social determinant of health and continues to perpetuate inequities across all social determinant factors. Communities with Black people are experiencing alarming inequities in cancer, asthma and mental and physical health; to police brutality and unequal access to equitable health care: racism is a public health crisis!

Establishing Racial Equity in Public Health would allow people like my 83-year-old uncle to have quality healthcare in his community. During the peak of the pandemic he was diagnosed with cancer and due to his preexisting health concerns he needed additional healthcare. For fear of his life I found a facility that is over 50 minutes from his home, why? Due to quality of care he would receive, and the fact that he would receive appropriate care. When we declare racism a public health crisis we can begin to reimagine hope in our communities.

Specifically, I strongly support H.B. 6662, An Act Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis and Establishing the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health. CSH has made a commitment to being an ant-racist organization. In 2018 CSH established the CT Race Equity Framework for Housing and Homelessness that outlines the experiences of people who experienced homelessness in CT. It clearly assists with creating a roadmap on strategies to advance equitable policies to build racial transformers, demonstrate representative leadership, allot resources for ant-racism work, and cultivate culturally inclusive environments.

I respectfully recommend the bill include staffing to create racial impact assessments on proposed policies. This will enable the Connecticut General Assembly to evaluate the potential for policies to promote equity or have a disparate impact.

The pandemic did not create the deep racial inequities in our state, but it can be an opportunity to address them. This bill takes steps to dismantle components of systemic racism and move Connecticut



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closer to health equity. It is pertinent that we address this challenge today and making the declaration is the first step towards creating the change that generations before us were seeking. It is our obligation to address the problem by embedding ant-racist principles in the way we forge forward and do work in Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in writing in support of **H.B. No. 6662, An Act Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis and Establishing the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health.**

Sincerely,
Monique Price-Taylor