

Government Administration and Elections Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6909

AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY STATE AGENCIES

Title: REGARDING APPROPRIATE TERMINOLOGY.

Vote Date: 3/27/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/20/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

General Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill requires state agencies in Connecticut to seek feedback from members or representatives of a particular community based on ethnicity, religious affiliation, race, gender identity, or sexual orientation, before using any term to describe or identify such community in an official communication to the public or on a form to be completed by the public. The bill defines "state agency" as any executive branch agency of state government, including public institutions of higher education, and is effective from October 1, 2023.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Representative Minnie Gonzalez, 3rd District, Connecticut General Assembly](#): Supports this bill

This bill seeks to address potential issues by working with communities to solicit their feedback as tax-paying citizens that have every right to address how their government communicates with them and about them.

[Representative James Sánchez, 6th District, Connecticut General Assembly](#): Opposes this bill

Mr. Sanchez, who is Puerto Rican, discusses in his written testimony why he opposes to this bill, specifically with regards to the word "LatinX" being used to identify people of Hispanic descent.

Representative Geraldo Reyes, Jr., 75th District, Connecticut General Assembly:

Opposes this bill

The word "Latinx" is unnecessary, because the "Latino/Latin" word is already gender neutral. There is no point in using a word that most of the Latino population does not use.

Representative Anabel Figueroa, 148th District, Connecticut General Assembly:

Supports this bill but with a language change

We (people of Hispanic & Latin descent) cannot always be lumped together under a collective name. We are a blur of colors and languages, histories, and faces. No one word can capture that all, Especially LATINX . So, today we are respectfully requesting for the LATINX word to be dropped from any official communication not only because it is not recognized by the REAL ACADEMY ESPANOLA but out of respect for the fact that this word is very offensive to most Hispanic and Latin descendants.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Michelle Castillo:

General comments by Michelle for "LatinX" not being a term to describe Latin/Hispanic community members.

Valerie Lugo:

Valerie makes several comments in her written testimony as to why the use of "LatinX" is a poor idea in her opinion.

Chris Garcia-Rivera:

Chris comments about Rep. Reyes's position on this bill that "Its very encouraging to hear another Hispanic come out about "LatinX" and not be hateful about it."

David Burgos:

General support comments made.

Guillermo Chalerman:

I believe this bill should get more awareness. The attack on cisgender men & the Caribbean community is exhausting. Honestly, I wish our state would celebrate Caribbean Heritage Month every year to celebrate our culture since Miguel Cardona, Alejandro Mayorkas, and Susan Rice are all Caribbean.

Gilbert V Garcia:

Thank you so much for standing up to the ridiculous people that coined the "LatinX" term.

Doris Maldonado Mendez, Statewide Bilingual Health Information Specialist:

As a Puerto Rican, I've had to come to terms that Hispanic and Latino/a may not accurately define me as a Caribbean descendant but have found a place with "mi Pueblo" and the rich diversity that only we share as Latinos. I applaud and appreciate Representative Reyes's stance.

Elena Poma:

Elena offers comments of support to representative Reyes for introducing the bill to prohibit the use of the term "LatinX".

Bessy Rena:

Institutions need to be held accountable for providing the correct language to those they serve. A small segment of individuals not wellversed in the language has adopted flawed vocabulary and unnecessary remediation. Our language does not need fixing; stop belittling our ethnicity.

Lupe Robles:

A Mexican American woman, Lupe expresses in her testimony that the term "LatinX" is offensive to her.

Kathleen Ward:

Kathleen is an English instructor for people who speak other languages. She offers Representative Reyes thanks for his support of this bill and removing the term "LatinX".

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

ATNECIV RODRIGUEZ:

At any given moment a 'representative' of a community who believes that a term is inappropriate due to their own biases will be inserting their biased conclusions to state agencies therefore influencing the removal of terms that community members may think otherwise. Having this bill will be creating a space for discrimination to occur.

JT Torres, Educational Psychologist & writer:

The idea is not to replace one label for another. When Rep. Hilda Santiago (D-Meriden) claimed that she "didn't give anyone permission to change the language," she is—at best—expressing an impossibility. We will never prevent language from changing. At worst, however, she is arguing against democracy. Democratic societies do not need permission to change; and they thrive precisely because they change. We should not continue the very colonial aspects of history we wish to challenge.

Elena Marie Rosario:

Who will determine the appropriate terminology? Suppose it is state representatives who supported a transphobic bill. In that case, I am concerned about giving the state the power to ban or limit the use of a word. This will have long-term consequences in our state and needs proper community review and contribution.

[Anna Allen:](#)

This bill would effectively prohibit the right for the public including minoritized communities such as the Latinx/Latine/Latino community from being able to choose how they self-identify on government documents, public and higher education institutions. Effectively removing public ability to self-identify and redistributing that privilege to CT state agencies including any department, board, council, commission, institution, or other executive branch agency of state government.

[Linda Dalessio:](#)

General opposition comments made.

[Eileen Galvez:](#)

Eileen, who is the daughter of Salvadoran Refugees, makes several points in her written testimony as to why she opposes this bill, cautioning, among other things, that the term "LatinX" is offensive to many whom identify as those of Hispanic or Latin descent.

[John Kornegay:](#)

I oppose this bill. It is non-sensical and beneath consideration.

Anonymous: Two anonymous written testimonies were submitted with general opposition comments. Links to each are below.

[Anonymous #1](#)

[Anonymous #2](#)

Reported by: Robert Mayne

Date: 03-27-2023