

**Testimony of Regina L. Clement**  
**In Support of House Bill 7724 – AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- OFFENSES PERTAINING TO**  
**SCHOOLS -- THE CROWN ACT**

Chairman McNamara and members of the House Committee on Education  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
RI State House  
Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

April 19, 2023

My name is Regina Clement and I live in Providence, RI. and I stand in support of House Bill 7724- AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- OFFENSES PERTAINING TO SCHOOLS. A policy that would further define the terms "race and ethnicity" to include ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, and ethnic background and is inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. The CROWN Act, which stands for Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair has been passed into law in over 19 states including our neighbors Massachusetts and Connecticut.

I am a Black woman and a member of the Providence Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. We are a Public Service Organizations with more than 1000 chapters all over the world. Our organization was founded in 1913 by 22 collegiate women dedicated to social action and providing support to the Black community. The CROWN Act is a legislative priority for our organization. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. through its chapters plans to advocate and support the passage of The CROWN Act in any state in which it is not, thus supporting House Bill 7724. This legislation will ensure that traits historically associated with race, such as hair texture and hairstyles, are protected from discrimination in the workplace and in K-12 public and charter schools.

In Rhode Island, it does not currently afford protection from race-based hair discrimination, even if the hairstyle is inherent to racial identity. That means, Black women can be denied opportunities for employment or professional advancement without consequence. It means Black children can be denied entry to school or educational opportunities because of their natural hair.

Therefore, I am in full support of House Bill 7724 and respectfully ask for your Yes vote.

Sincerely,

Regina L. Clement  
Providence, RI