



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1743		DATE: 1/24/2022	
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Urban Issues			
TESTIFYING: ☒ IN SUPPORT OF ☐ IN OPPOSITION TO ☐ FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2022 11:18 PM
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I Support this Bill			



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CHERYL LYNN ADELSTEIN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-442-3872	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL		TITLE: DEPUTY DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 12 MILLSTONE CAMPUS DRIVE			
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63146
EMAIL: cadelstein@jcrcstl.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2022 2:34 PM	
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The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), guided by Jewish values, advocates, educates, collaborates, and mobilizes action on issues important to the Jewish community, 60,000 strong in St. Louis. We are committed to pursuing religious tolerance, civic discourse and social justice in St. Louis and beyond. Jews also believe in the concept of B'tzelem Elohim, We are all created in the image of God. This includes people of all races, genders, and faiths. Discrimination against any group is wrong and must be addressed. Our sages note the repeated emphasis on the stranger in biblical law. According to Rabbi Eliezer in the Talmud (Baba Metsia 59b) the Torah ``warns against the wronging of a ger." Today we define ger, the stranger, as those whose liberties and lives are threatened simply because of the color of their skin, their gender identity, their country of origin, or their religious beliefs. The stranger is anyone who must daily confront systemic denial of access to opportunities enjoyed by most other members of society. As a part of the Jewish Community, we have experienced what is it liked to be treated as a ger or "other," and still today, some Jews feel the need to hide their identifies, uncomfortable with the discrimination or comments they might be subject to because they wear a yarmulke (protective head covering), or a symbol of their Judaism such as a Jewish star around their neck. HB 1743 & 2185 ensures no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race in any program or activity conducted by an educational institution that receives or benefits from state financial assistance or enrolls pupils who receive state student financial aid. This includes discrimination based on hair texture and protective hairstyles, meaning styles or types historically associated with race that includes, but is not limited to braids, locks, afros, curls, and twists. These bills offer protection against racism. We are a country and state that still struggling with a problematic history including slavery and systemic and institutional racism. These disparities have created a wealth and income gap, which can be closed in part through education. These bills will reduce discrimination in publicly supported education institutions. We urge you to support HB 1743 & 2185.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ERIN GRAY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: erineileengray@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2022 10:23 PM
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This Missouri family fully supports the Crown Act.			



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JASMINE BOURDEAU		PHONE NUMBER: 980-337-8508	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JACK & JILL OF AMERICA		TITLE: CHAPTER PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: 11950 S RT N			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2022 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNA M ROBERSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: jroberson1181@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2022 10:19 PM

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I am in full support.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JESSICA PETRIE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-635-6092	
REPRESENTING: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, MISSOURI CHAPTER		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1805			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: jessica@wintonpolicygroup.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2022 12:57 PM

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Submitting written testimony in support from the National Association of Social Workers, Missouri Chapter's President.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JULIE ALLEN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: julieallenfort@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2022 11:14 AM
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I support the bills that prohibit discrimination based off hair styles and braids.			



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MAGGIE OLIVIA EDMONDSON		PHONE NUMBER: 314-368-1137	
REPRESENTING: PRO CHOICE MISSOURI		TITLE: POLICY MANAGER	
ADDRESS: 1210 S VANDEVENTER AVE			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63110
EMAIL: maggie@prochoicemissouri.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2022 1:47 PM

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Chairwoman Proudie, Vice-Chairman Cupps, members of the committee; thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today in support of HB 2185 and 1743 which would prohibit certain discriminatory practices on the basis of race, hair texture and protective hairstyles. Pro-Choice Missouri works to protect and expand every Missourian's right to bodily autonomy, to access essential reproductive healthcare, to access accurate information to make the best decisions for ourselves and our families, and to parent our children in safety and dignity. Moreover, we work to ensure reproductive justice for all Missourians, which involves advocating to reduce disparities based on race, income level, insurance coverage status, and other factors. Our core belief is in expanding agency and choice for all people: ensuring that all Missourians are able to make decisions about their own bodies without fear of discrimination, harassment or retaliation. Currently, hair discrimination precludes Black Missourians from free choice and equal treatment. Reports across the nation indicate continued discrimination against Black students, leading to expulsions, suspensions, and public humiliation. As a result, research has indicated that Black women are 80% more likely to change their natural hair to conform to social norms and expectations. Without laws that bar explicit discrimination against hair textures and protective hairstyles, Black students in Missouri will continue experiencing this form of racial discrimination. Research has also indicated that restrictions on "acceptable" hair also increase disciplinary actions against Black students, ranging from being barred entry to school to being removed from extracurricular activities. These punitive responses harm educational attainment for Black students, increase mistrust between students and teachers, and legitimizes racist discrimination in schools. Pro-Choice Missouri, representing more than 70,000 members across the state, supports the advancement of these bills, and urges you to vote YES today. Thank you.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MARJORIE DORIME-WILLIAMS		PHONE NUMBER: 631-704-7491	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JACK & JILL OF AMERICA, INC., CENTRAL MISSOURI CHAPTER		TITLE: CHAPTER RECORDING SECRETARY	
ADDRESS: 409 GRAY FOX COURT			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65202
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2022 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: NIMROD CHAPEL JR		PHONE NUMBER: 816-309-5009	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI NAACP		TITLE: PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: 301 W. DUNKLIN			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2022 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: RUTH BANKS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ruth.marie.banks@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2022 10:10 AM
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As a retired educator, I know the importance of self-esteem and acceptance in building student confidence. When a student feels accepted for who they are and how they look, that confidence provides a foundation for success. Providing students with the social/emotional skills they need to succeed is just as important as academic skills. In 2022 we shouldn't still have to pass legislation that respects a student's natural hairstyle, yet here we are. I am asking that you support the passage of this bill so ALL students are accepted as they wear natural hairstyles.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SCOTT MCKELLAR		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mck9@swbell.net	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2022 8:48 AM
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The thrust of this bill is laudable, and I fully support it. However there is no reason to carve out a religious exemption. I'm not aware of any religion with an objection to, say, dreadlocks. If there are any, that's their problem. They still don't have a right to be racist jerks. Sooner or later somebody would invent an Eleventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not wear thy hair in dreadlocks," as a pretext. The laws on homicide don't carve out a religious exemption for devotees of Huitzilopochtli, allowing them to pull out the still-beating hearts of sacrificial victims as an offering to their god. Anti-discrimination laws are perhaps not quite so dire, but they should follow the same principle.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: Onesuegibson@protonmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2022 9:12 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JILLIAN BARNAS		PHONE NUMBER: 815-274-9225	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MOST POLICY INITIATIVE		TITLE: HUMAN SERVICES, PUBLIC SAFETY & CORRECTIONS POLICY	
ADDRESS: 238 E. HIGH STREET			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: jill@mostpolicyinitiative.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2022 4:30 PM
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For the published version of this Science Note, please visit the provided link:

<https://mostpolicyinitiative.org/science-note/racial-discrimination-based-on-hair-texture-style/Racial-Discrimination-Based-on-Hair-Texture/Style-Executive-Summary> School and workplace policies that regulate hair textures and styles disproportionately affect Black children and adults, and may lead to negative educational, economic and health outcomes. Most federal and state anti-discrimination laws do not explicitly define race to include the physical characteristics historically associated with race, such as hair texture and protective hairstyles (e.g., braids, locks, twists). As a result, there is legal ambiguity as to whether education and employment policies (e.g., dress codes, hiring/firing practices) related to hair textures and styles constitute a form of discrimination based on race. House Bills 1743, 2185, 2373, 2392 and Senate Bill 994 would prohibit educational institutions that receive state financial assistance or enroll students receiving state financial aid from offering programs and activities that discriminate based on hair texture and protective hair styles. Some of these bills also add a similar definition of race to an existing Missouri statute (RSMo Chapter 213) that prohibits racial discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing. As of 2022, 14 states and several cities, including Kansas City, have passed similar legislation. Highlights -- Some dress codes prohibit natural hair textures and/or protective hairstyles on the grounds that they are not "neat", "clean" and/or "professional." These policies may be considered a form of race-based discrimination because they disproportionately impact non-White individuals, especially Black girls and women.-- In schools with zero tolerance policies, dress code violations can result in suspension, which reduces in-seat learning time and may contribute to future disciplinary actions. Workplace discrimination based on natural hair textures and protective hairstyles can limit employment opportunities, as well as present and future earnings.-- Hair- and race-based discrimination has negative physical and mental health consequences.-- Fourteen states, including Nebraska and Illinois, currently prohibit education and employment discrimination based on hair texture and style. The city council in Kansas City, Missouri passed a similar resolution in October 2020.Limitations -- Most hair anti-discrimination laws have been enacted over the last few years, so there is limited information about how these policies directly impact education, employment and health outcomes, especially over the long-term. Research Background Discrimination based on race, color or national origin The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits any federally assisted program (including schools) from discriminating based on race, color or national origin. Additionally, employers and labor unions are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and national origin. Missouri law (RSMo 213.055) also specifies that it is illegal to discriminate in any aspect of employment because of an individual's

race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, disability or age. Race & hair texture/style: Natural hair texture is influenced by the shape of the tube (follicle) the hair grows from, which varies between individuals and can change with age.^{1,2} Straight hair textures are more common in European and Asian Americans, while highly textured hair (tight curls/coils) is more common among African Americans. Hairstyles such as braids, locks, twists and Bantu knots are considered “protective” because they limit the manipulation of highly textured hair and therefore minimize hair damage/breakage. Highly textured hair and protective hairstyles are less likely to be associated with beauty and professionalism compared to straight hair.³⁻⁵ Policies that prohibit certain hair textures and/or styles may be considered a form of race-based discrimination on the grounds that some hair textures and protective hairstyles have been historically associated with race.⁶ Dress codes & employer practices: Dress codes sometimes include restrictions about how students and employees can wear their hair; some prohibit certain hairstyles (e.g., braids, locks, Afros) or colors, while others require hair to be “neat,” “clean,” and/or “professional.” These policies disproportionately impact individuals whose natural hair is not straight, particularly Black girls & women.⁵⁻⁷ While some policies have been reversed after discrimination concerns have been voiced, previous court decisions have established precedent for upholding dress code/grooming policies (EEOC v. Catastrophe Management Solutions, 2017).⁸ Legal action beyond formal complaints is relatively rare and not usually advised by legal experts due to the ambiguity in existing statutory language regarding hair and/or appearance-based discrimination. Education & employment consequences associated with hair-based discrimination In addition to students being barred from school events and activities (e.g., prom, athletics), schools with zero-tolerance policies for dress code violations can mandate out-of-school suspensions. The relationship between dress code violations and suspensions has raised concerns about educational losses from out-of-class time and later-in-life consequences of school disciplinary actions, including behavioral issues, increased school dropout rates and an increased risk of incarceration.^{7,9,10} Hair-related discrimination can also influence employer decisions about hiring, firing and promotions. For example, a recent study found that Black women with natural hairstyles were considered less competent and professional than Black women with straightened hairstyles and White women with straight or curly hair, received less favorable evaluations of job applications and were less likely to be offered an interview.¹¹ This has raised concerns that individuals with natural hair and protective hairstyles have limited opportunities for economic advancement, independent of their qualifications for the job. Health consequences associated with hair-based discrimination School and workplace policies that discourage natural hair and protective hairstyles can negatively impact physical and mental health. Some components of chemical straightening/relaxing treatments have been associated with hormone disruption, fibroids and some cancers, although additional research is necessary to support a causal relationship.^{12,13} Because Black individuals, especially Black women, are significantly more likely than their White counterparts to use these hair products, there is a risk that restrictive hair policies can perpetuate racial health inequities.¹⁴ There is also evidence that individuals with chemically straightened hair are more reluctant to get their hair wet during exercise (e.g., sweating, swimming), which can reduce participation in physical activity and sporting events.^{15,16} Lack of exercise is a risk factor for several negative health outcomes that disproportionately affect minoritized individuals, including diabetes, obesity and heart disease.¹⁷ Significant mental health impacts have also been reported by individuals whose natural hair or protective hairstyle is deemed disruptive or unprofessional. Discrimination has been associated with increased anxiety and depression and reduced confidence, which mediate larger overall negative impacts on general health.^{18,19} State-level policy The American Bar Association, along with several medical professional associations and the private and nonprofit organizations that make up the Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Coalition have voiced support for federal, state and local policies, like the CROWN Act, that explicitly ban school and workplace discrimination based on physical characteristics associated with race and cultural identity.²⁰ Fourteen states (CA, CO, CT, DE, IL, MD, NE, NJ, NM, NY, NV, OR, VA, WA) currently have text related to the CROWN Act in statute, and similar legislation has been filed in twenty states, including Kansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Indiana and Kentucky. In the absence of statewide policies, some cities have approved their own policies consistent with the CROWN Act. In a unanimous vote in October 2020, Kansas City became the first city in Missouri to have CROWN Act provisions in place (Ordinance #200837). Over the last five years, the Army, Navy and Marines have also added some protective hairstyles (braids, locks, twists) to their permitted grooming standards. Missouri legislation Missouri House Bills 1743, 2185, 2373, 2392 and Senate Bill 994, filed during the 2022 regular legislative session, would prohibit educational institutions that receive state financial assistance or enroll students receiving state financial aid from offering programs and activities that discriminate based on race, including physical characteristics like hair texture and style. Some of these bills also add a similar definition of race to an existing Missouri statute (RSMo Chapter 213) that prohibits racial discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing. For more information about definitions of race

and ethnicity in the U.S., read our Science Note on the topic. References

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