



Legislation Text

File #: 0115X-2020, **Version:** 1

To express support for the CROWN ACT - Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair and to recognize the impact of racism as a public health crisis and implicit bias in the City of Columbus.

WHEREAS, The United States has a history that is filled with laws and societal norms that have equated “blackness,” to a badge of inferiority and thus have subjected people of color, and people with certain features and others to separate and unequal treatment - these physical traits include skin color, kinky and curly hair, and non- Eurocentric hairstyles; and

WHEREAS, Sadly these laws and societal norms have also come to embody society’s very definition of professionalism - professionalism remains closely linked to European features, mannerisms, and customs - and those who do not naturally fall into Eurocentric norms find themselves forced to alter their appearance in drastic and permanent ways which erase their very cultural identity - all in an effort to be accepted and respected as a professional and ignoring the impact and the struggle within themselves to find balance in their social, emotional, mental, spiritual and physical health; and

WHEREAS, Implicit biases remain a part of American culture, despite the efforts that have been made to create an accepting environment and laws that embrace diversity and inclusion all in the quest to reverse a racist ideology that Black traits are inferior - however black hair remains a rampant source of racial discrimination with serious economic and health consequences, especially for Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, studies show that Black women are 1.5 times more likely to be sent home from the workplace because of their hair and that a Black woman is 80% more likely to change her natural hair to meet social norms or expectations at work; and

WHEREAS, The Official Campaign of The CROWN Act Led by the CROWN Coalition was founded by Dove, the National Urban League, the Color of Change, and the Western Center of Law & Poverty in 2019; and

WHEREAS, this campaign was created to ensure protection against discrimination based on race-based hairstyles by extending statutory protections to hair texture and protective styles for men, women and gender association which include braids, locs, twists, and knots in the workplace and in public schools; and

WHEREAS, Workplace dress codes and grooming policies which prohibit natural hair, including afros, braids, twists, and locks, have a disparate impact on Black individuals as these policies are more likely to deter Black applicants and burden or punish Black employees more than any other group; and

WHEREAS, many states do not have laws that afford protection to Black Americans for race-based hair discrimination, even if the hairstyles are inherent to one’s racial identity - this means that for many Black women opportunities can be denied for employment or professional advancement without a consequence - this also means that Black boys and girls can be denied entry into schools, educational opportunities, and other benefits due to their hair; and

WHEREAS, this Council would like to recognize and express its appreciation to the countless people and organizations who advocate and champion natural hair and natural hairstyles, despite the societal norms and expectations - this includes local examples such as Ms. Karen Hill who serves as the CEO & President of Synergi Salon and the Columbus Chapter

of The Links, Incorporated who are a part of an international organization of women committed to Leadership, Friendship and Service, now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

That this Council does express support for the CROWN ACT - Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair and recognizes the impact of racism as a public health crisis and implicit bias in the City of Columbus.