

SB0052/346780/1

BY: Health and Government Operations Committee

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 52
(Third Reading File Bill)

On page 3, after line 23, insert:

“Preamble

WHEREAS, Race is a social construct with no biological basis that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, and the social, economic, and political needs of a society at a given period; and

WHEREAS, Racism is a social system with multiple dimensions that include individual racism that is internalized or interpersonal, systemic racism that is institutional or structural, and a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks; and

WHEREAS, Racism unfairly gives disadvantages to specific individuals and communities while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities and undermines society as a whole through the waste of human resources necessary to promote prosperity and development in Maryland and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, Racism is rooted in the foundation of America, from the time chattel slavery began in the 1600s, to the Jim Crow era, to the declaration of the war on drugs that eventually led to the mass incarceration of black people, and it has remained a presence in American society while subjecting black people, indigenous people, and people of color to hardships and disadvantages in every aspect of life; and

(Over)

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WHEREAS, The American Public Health Association, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, and the American Academy of Pediatrics have declared racism a public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, Communities of color, working-class residents, and individuals with disabilities are more likely to experience poor health outcomes as a consequence of their social determinants of health; and

WHEREAS, Racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment, criminal justice and incarceration, family stability, economic opportunity, access to health care, public safety, environmental safety, inadequate nutrition, voters' rights, and under-resourced recreational and health care facilities; and

WHEREAS, More than 100 studies have linked racism to worse health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Racism exacerbates health disparities among black, Hispanic, and Native American residents, including a greater risk of heart disease, stroke, infant mortality, maternal mortality, lower birth weight, obesity, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, cancers, respiratory diseases, and autoimmune diseases; and

WHEREAS, Specific physical and behavioral health conditions stemming from racism include depression, anxiety, anger, fear, trauma, terror, and long-term physical and mental health impairments; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 crisis and ongoing protests against police brutality have helped to highlight now, more than ever, that racism, not race, causes disparities for black and brown Americans; now, therefore,".