

Commission on Multicultural Education – Establishment SB662

Mister Chair, Madam Vice Chair, and members of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee.

My name is Matthew Darden I submit this written testimony in favor of the establishment of a Commission on Multicultural Education. I believe that it is time for the teaching to reflect the landscape of this State.

The current curriculum and school climate omits and devalues the contributions of Black and Brown people in our history and culture. Students are often taught about Thomas Edison who is lauded as the creator of the light bulb but there is little mention of Lewis Latimer. Lewis Latimer is the inventor who proposed the use of carbon filament to expand the life of light bulb. As an adult and after my own research this was discovered.

The white washing of America's history is a disparity that I have personally felt as a kid growing up in the south. It is my belief that this educational gap continues to perpetrate the root of all white supremacist, that they are superior and all others are less than. This disparity diminishes the impact people of color have had on this country and perpetuates racial discrimination for our students. Representation matters, this ensures that students see things that look like them, and gives them hope that they can achieve more. Our children must see themselves reflected in the classroom from the pages of the books they are learning from. A complete historical depiction is a must so that clarity and understanding is gained from our rich heritage.

In the closing I am asking for a favorable report on SB662. I believe that this commission would provide a much needed third party review of curriculum across the state. We have to push the needle forward and change the status quo.

Sincerely,

Matthew Darden

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