

Kansas State Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs
Support for the CROWN ACT

TO: Mr. Chairman, Senator Thompson
FROM: Samara Sayid
DATE: January 10, 2024

Dear Chairman, Thompson and Members of the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs,

I am grateful for the chance to present my testimony to the Kansas State Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs in support of the CROWN Act (Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair). The CROWN Act will provide greater access and inclusion for Black people, people of color, and everyone in the Kansas community.

As a Black college student, it's crucial for me to have spaces where my natural hair is accepted, both by my educators and future employers. The significance of the CROWN Act extends beyond personal expression, it directly contributes to a positive and inclusive educational and professional experience. My natural hair is a part of my identity, whether it is curly, in braids, or another protective hairstyle. Having acceptance in academic and professional settings is not only empowering but also paves the way for cultural diversity and understanding.

A study conducted by Dove in 2023 displayed disparities in the professional perception of Black women's hair. The findings demonstrated that Black women's hair is 2.5 times more likely to be unfairly viewed as unprofessional compared to their counterparts. This bias not only reflects a cultural misunderstanding but also has tangible consequences in the workplace. Black women, as a result of racially discriminatory perceptions, often encounter negative experiences and outcomes in professional settings.

There is an urgent need to address these discriminatory practices, emphasizing the importance of legislative measures like the CROWN Act. I hope that through initiatives such as the CROWN Act, we can foster an environment that values and celebrates all individuals, regardless of their background. Let's strive to cultivate a community of people who feel respected and affirmed in their educational, career pursuits, and as a member of society. I hope you will vote in support of the CROWN Act, thank you.

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