

Date of Testimony: March 10, 2022

Bill Number or Topic Title: *Senate Bill 130*

Disposition: Proponent

WRITTEN-ONLY Testimony

Name of Conferee: Angeline F. Johnson angelinejohnson@gmail.com (Self)

Testimony in Support of the Passage Senate Bill 130 - "The Crown Act"

Chair: Senator Rob Olsen, Federal and State Affairs Committee
Vice Chair: Senator Richard Hilderbrand,
Ranking Member: Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau
Members: Sen. Cindy Holscher, Sen. Rick Kloos, Sen. Jeff Longbine, Sen. Mike Petersen,
Sen. Ronald Ryckman, Sen. Alicia Straub

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I would like to begin by first thanking you for taking the time to hear testimony regarding the proposed amendment to Senate Bill 130 also known as "The Crown Act" which specifically seeks to amend the definition of "race" in the Kansas act against discrimination to include traits historically associated with race, including hair texture and protective hairstyles.

Every morning, as productive members of our society, each one of us wakes up and begins the process of transitioning from the casual comfort of our respective places of residence, to preparing to present ourselves for interaction with the spaces and places through which we navigate our days.

Spaces and places such as:

- Our schools.
- Our jobs.
- Our neighborhoods.

Sadly, in these common and simple daily tasks lies both a challenge and at times a fear faced by some of your very own associates, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and fellow human brothers and sisters. A challenge and fear that is rooted in what has often been neither known nor understood fact. A challenge and fear that for many of us, a basic aspect of self-care and grooming serves as a source of judgment, criticism, and discrimination. A space of trepidation and concern related to how to best navigate spaces and places something as core to who we are, the texture and style of our hair, has been used to dictates our treatment, experience, and opportunity to simply live, work, and play in public spaces.

As a society, for years we have observed discrimination based on hair impacting particular racial groups throughout the county. Examples of newspaper headlines:

- 2022 – [Dove Ad Reminds All That Discrimination Against Black Hair Starts 'As Early As Five'](#)
- 2021 – [Penalizing Black hair in the name of academic success](#)
- 2020 – [Texas Teen Won't Be Able to Graduate Unless He Cuts His Dreadlocks](#)
- 2019 – [Wrestler Andrew Johnson forced to cut dreadlocks to avoid losing N.J. high school match](#)
- 2017 – [Ware on Black Hair: Wearing Braids Gets Black Girls Banned from Prom at Malden Charter School in Massachusetts](#)
- 2007 – [Ethnic hairstyles can cause uneasiness in the workplace](#)
- ETC...

I share the following about myself ...Not to boast or to brag, but to break down typical assumptions that often are present in conversations about natural hair texture and styles and the presumptions of who are those individuals of color who choose to wear their hair in these styles.

- I am unapologetically a Black/African American woman who wears my hair in locs.
- I am a person of Christian faith who actively lives out a life of love to and for others.
- I am a college-educated, multiple advance degree holding, 3rd generation college graduate.
- I am a small business owner and employer of Kansans.
- I am a citizen committed to improving the experiences of others as best as I can.
- I have chosen the State of Kansas to be my home though I was not born here.
- Again...I am unapologetically a Black/African American woman who wears my hair in locs.

Also, I am a constituent who can personally attest to the following:

Though many elected representatives as well as members of the general public in this state may not personally have an issue with or bias towards those with hair textures or styles that are commonly associated with race, there are still many people in authority who look to hair texture and styles as characteristics by which to judge the character of a person. And with that judgement comes the exhibition of biases that hold a negative impact on a person with hair like mine. The texture or style of my hair does not serve as a measure of the quality of my character. Nor does it convey an unwillingness to do a job and to do that job in excellence. It does not serve as evidence of a lack of commitment to the wellbeing of myself or those around me. YET, TODAY across this nation there are documented experiences of prejudice and discrimination against people with hair like mine causing this conversation to take place in statehouses, council chambers, boardrooms, and classrooms nationwide. It is my hope that you as legislative leaders here in Kansas join states like the following that have recognize and accepted for their states the need and importance of the passage of The CROWN Act:

- [Minnesota House passes 'Crown Act' hair discrimination bill](#)
- [Nevada is 12th state to pass CROWN Act, making race-based hair discrimination illegal](#)
- [Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women Chairwoman Clark Testifies in Support of The Crown Act](#)
- [Crown Act moves out of the House of Representatives](#) (Tennessee)
- [Gov. Pritzker Signs Landmark Legislation to Prevent Hair Discrimination in Schools](#) (Illinois)
- [California and New York Ban Workplace Hair Discrimination, While New Jersey and Michigan Propose the Same](#)
- And others



Discriminatory practices (that are currently taking place in our state) that harm and shame others for being that to which they were created to be is wrong. ***And because I believe it to be wrong, as a constituent in this state I extend my support as a Proponent of the Passage Senate Bill 130 - "The Crown Act."*** It is my hope that the State of Kansas will choose to join the states and municipalities across our nation who have taken a stand against these practices in support of the extension of basic human dignity that is deserved to be experienced by all.

Thank you for both your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angelina F. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ms. Angelina F. Johnson, Wichita, Kansas