



S.C. R. 14 Proponent Testimony
Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Committee
June 23, 2020
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Chairman Burke and members of the Ohio Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SCR 14. As the leading voice of business in the Dayton region, the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce recognizes its great responsibility to champion diversity, equity, racial justice, and inclusion in our region. As such, Dayton's business community stands in support of efforts to declare racism a public health crisis.

We have long known systemic racism has resulted in inequities within our communities, here in Dayton, and across the country. The tragic death of George Floyd has brought us to a national turning point, and now we must task ourselves with tearing down long-standing policies and practices, changing not only our internal biases, but also the institutional racism that has led to deep disparities for our communities of color. In the business world, these disparities undercut the ability of some of our residents to realize prosperity and stifle the growth and success of our economy.

Employers in our region believe we must take further action to ensure the voices of all, especially our Black community, are not only heard, but invoke real and lasting change. We can say we are against racism, but what are we going to do about it? The Dayton Area Chamber commits to increased dialogue and awareness of racial injustices, further education for employers and employees to improve diverse and inclusive workplace practices, continued advocacy and leadership in the growth of minority-owned businesses and enhanced engagement with minority business leaders, and strengthened partnerships with the African American community to work against racism. Additionally, the Dayton Area Chamber pledges to use our voice as a leader in public policy advocacy to advance legislative solutions that help the state of Ohio and the Dayton region's minority population overcome racial barriers.

We believe that SCR 14 is an important first step in dismantling racism in the State of Ohio. The road ahead will require all of us, as citizens and as representatives of our institutions, to work jointly to change entrenched policies and practices. The Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce is a partner and ally in creating a community where all can thrive.