

Good Morning! My name is Philip Adenodi, I am a Social Studies teacher at Henry High School in Minneapolis. This year is my first year teaching African American Studies. I am testifying in support of bill HF1502. As a lover of history, a Black person, and a Nigerian- American I constantly pursued knowledge of the beautiful African Diaspora and its history. Unfortunately, there was little space to learn in any part of my education before college. I did not have any ethnic studies growing up in Minnesota. So, I tried to find it out myself, and this pursuit of knowledge lead me to being a teacher. However, I am empowered now to know that it should not have been this hard to find out my history and the true clear history of this country. I need everyone who is fighting for this bill and everyone who is fighting against this bill to understand the harm done by the omission of these topics in your own education. Think about how it impacted the people you think about and the communities you fight for.

If you do not learn about African American people, African American history, African American resistance in the face of oppression, and the current realities of all Black people. How will you actually value their complex existence as human beings and their human rights?

If you do not learn about Native peoples, Native history, Native resistance in the face of oppression, and the current realities of Native peoples. How will you actually value their complex existence as human beings and their human rights?

If you do not learn about Asian Americans, Asian American history, Asian American resistance in the face of oppression, and the current realities of all Asian peoples and Pacific Islanders. How will you actually value their complex existence as human beings and their human rights?

If you do not learn about Latine/Chicanx people, Latine/Chicanx history, Latine/Chicanx resistance in the face of oppression, and the current realities of all Chicanx/Latine peoples. How will you actually value their complex existence as human beings and their human rights?

I separate these groups out not to be repetitive but to acknowledge their unique realities that have similar roots. Ethnic studies strengthen students' identity development, benefit both students of color and white students alike and teach all students to value their history, and the history of others, and push all of us to create a better, more equitable society. I want to see a day when all students have the complete and true knowledge to make active change in this country. As a teacher, and a citizen I greatly encourage you all to support Bill HF1502.

Thank you