

Members of the Education Finance Committee,

3/22/23

Thank you for taking a moment to consider my concerns regarding HF 1502, the addition of an Ethnic Studies Graduation Requirement. My name is Karin Miller. I am a wife, mother, and Teacher from Dakota County. Even though I currently am home educating my children, I chose to speak out because I care about the entire generation my children are growing up with. They are the future of America.

I am concerned about the addition of an Ethnic Studies requirement because it is based on divisive ideologies and will distract school districts and teachers from focusing on core academic instruction.

At a time when schools are already struggling to meet current graduation requirements, it makes no sense to heap on an additional requirement. Over 50% of public students are failing to meet grade standards in reading, math, and science. The valuable time and money that this bill would allocate to be used to implement new standards, model curriculum, and a 25 person working group on Ethnic Studies, should instead be invested to help students regain lost learning.

Overall, students learning about cultures and ethnicities different from their own is a valuable lesson. And every student should be able to recognize their own ethnic heritage as a part of the diverse history of our country.

Although, we must carefully consider the ideological framework through which we are teaching ethnic studies. Do we really want to teach our students that they are divided into oppressor or oppressed groups based on their race, class and gender? Do we truly believe that our students are trapped by the level of melanin in their skin to be inherently an oppressor or forever the oppressed?

Let us teach them the truth – that each one of us is descended from one human race, just with differing levels of melanin. That despite our external differences and our past histories, we all have the same potential on the inside to either become a noble instrument of what is just and good, or become a cruel instrument of evil and vice. This is the heritage and the potential of every young American!

Teaching ethnic studies through a lens of critical race theory will only deepen the divisions between us and enslave us all. Let us therefore choose to link arms and continue to break free!

Education in Minnesota cannot afford the division and distraction that a new Ethnic Studies Requirement would create. Therefore, I ask you to oppose HF 1502.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Karin Miller