

Denise: Please post. Thanks.

From: vermont-house-government-operations@googlegroups.com <vermont-house-government-operations@googlegroups.com> on behalf of Mark Hughes <mark@justiceforallvt.org>

Sent: Saturday, April 21, 2018 4:42 PM

To: vermont-house-government-operations@googlegroups.com; racial-justice-reform-coalition@googlegroups.com; racial-justice-reform-advocates@googlegroups.com; Vermont-press-contacts@googlegroups.com; Cate Chant; Anne Galloway

Subject: S.281 Systemic Racism Mitigation Bill

Madam Chair and members of the Committee,

I am shocked at the sweeping changes that have essentially rendered the Systemic Racism Mitigation Bill as pointless. Much attention has been given to the removal of the independent nature and subpoena authority of the Director. Though these actions concern me personally, there are other decisions that you have proposed that further threaten hopes that this legislation will create a true chance to affect positive change.

Defunding the Director and Panel (HRS Internal Service Surcharge approved by Senate Appropriations) and removing the required administrative and technical support makes this entire endeavor a nonstarter. Another critical judgement error is placing the Director as a liaison between the Executive branch and the Human Rights Council. By their very nature, the HRC should NEVER be required to do their work through a liaison to any agency.

Finally, it deserves clarification that the intention of this role has always primarily been data collection to identify data points to measure progress, not to "point out to state agencies what they are doing wrong". It is disappointing to communities of color to see representatives of the political and economic power structure **pushing back on this plan to address systemic racism with a narrative of an explicit racism which hunt**. The direction that this legislation is headed is sideways and I hope that the committee can demonstrate the leadership and political and moral will to get it right.

Respectfully,

Mark A. Hughes,
ED, Justice For All

House Gov Ops Proposed Strike All Amendment:

1. **Eliminates the independent nature of the role** (reports to Governor).
2. **Insulates the Governor's Cabinet from the Vermont Human Rights Commission by mandating that the Director as a liaison between them.**
3. **Removes responsibility of collection and oversight of statewide race data.**
4. **Eliminates legal, administrative or technical support for the Director**
5. **Eliminates the Subpoena Authority of the Director**
6. **Defunds the Racial Equity Advisory Panel and Director by eliminating the HRS Internal Service Surcharge approved by Senate Appropriations.**
7. Creates a second redundant Panel (Racial Justice Advisory Panel) with NO appointment criteria to create the job description and submission of short list candidate list to the Governor.
8. Calls for Panel submission of candidate recommendations to Governor at the same time as the deadline for Panel seating

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