

Dear members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to you today because I believe that tomorrow's hearing on Bill H. 492 may mark an incredibly important step in the history of Vermont. As I said when I signed the petition to demonstrate my support in a state with such a small minority population it becomes even more important that we understand the threats they face and create a system that protects these valuable and essential members of our community.

You may or may not be aware of the recent VPR program [Why Is Vermont So Overwhelmingly White?](#)

This piece struck me for two reasons. 1) There is not only a lack of community and institutional support for minorities in Vermont, there isn't even a system in place to study what those community and institutional supports would look like. And, 2) Despite the fact that we view ourselves as progressive, welcoming, and inclusive we simply aren't.

Bill H. 492 provides a systemic way to both understand the ways in which Vermont falls short of its ideal of being inclusive and in fact may be causing harm, including the realms of criminal justice, housing, access to health care and education, and jobs as well as creates a framework to address and correct those issues.

Please support this bill. Vermont needs a Racial Justice Oversight Board. Creating one will set an example for all states and help Vermont lead the way in creating safe and inclusive communities for all.

Thank you,
Michelle Acciavatti