

RE: VT LEG #352843 v.1. Public Hearing on the selection of appropriate population-level indicators to demonstrate the quality of life for Vermonters who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC)

Here is my contribution to the Vermont Legislature's request for information on your "work on the selection of appropriate population-level indicators to demonstrate the quality of life for Vermonters who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC) and to expand the Legislature's, the Administration's, and our communities' understanding of the condition of wellbeing for BIPOC Vermonters."

I have been a Vermonter since 2015. From my observation, I believe that BIPOC Vermonters and a cross-section of other Vermonters as well for comparison should be surveyed for responses to the indicators listed in ACT 186 for improvement. Answers to the following questions could also be revealing:

- How long have you been in Vermont? (for generations, a decade, et cetera)
- How likely are you to stay in Vermont?
- Level of Education?
- Technical/Trade Skills?
- How easy is it to find work?
- Do you feel constantly discriminated against in your job, in the community, by law enforcement?

In order to move the state forward to become a more welcoming state for BIPOC folk, I would recommend that Vermont State encourage public reporting by:

- Large Employers on turnover of BIPOC employees
- Large employers on number of BIPOC employees in leadership/executive leadership.
- Law Enforcement on stops, arrests, et cetera of BIPOC folk as a percentage of the population
- Hospitals on Health quality indicators for BIPOC folk as compared with Average for healthcare institutions.
- Educational institutions on review of classroom material for removing possible aspects of racism

There should be a concerted effort by the various chambers of commerce to have posters of the farming community include images of the BIPOC folk who work on many of the farms. This one small change can engender respect for folk who are otherwise invisible but contribute greatly to the image of Vermont as a state that values its farmers.

Thank you for giving me the chance to contribute my thoughts to move us towards a future that is more inclusive of Vermonters who are Black, Indigenous or People of Color.

Sincerely,

Imogene A. Drakes, PhD