

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 27

Senators Bullock, Geiss, Ananich, Hertel, Santana, Wojno, Alexander, McCann, Brinks, Moss, Irwin, McMorrow, Polehanki, Bayer, Chang, Zorn and Hollier offered the following concurrent resolution:

1 A concurrent resolution to declare that racism is a public
2 health crisis in the state of Michigan and commit the Legislature
3 to action and collaboration with the Governor to promote racial
4 equity and justice throughout the entire state of Michigan.

5 Whereas, Racism is rooted in the foundations of the United
6 States. From the time chattel slavery began in the 1600s, to the
7 Jim Crow era, to the mass incarceration of Black citizens, racism
8 has remained an endemic presence in American society. While the
9 manifestation of prejudice has undergone structural changes over
10 time, the underlying problem remains. People of color have been
11 disadvantaged and subjected to hardships and outright brutality
12 since the founding of our nation; and

1 Whereas, The COVID-19 Pandemic has highlighted the stark
2 racial injustices that are still present in American society. Black
3 patients across the nation are dying in larger-than-expected,
4 record numbers, and COVID-19 is killing Black people at 2.4 times
5 the rate of White people. In Michigan, Black people make up less
6 than 14 percent of the population, yet they account for 40 percent
7 of the COVID-19 deaths in the state; and

8 Whereas, Black people are disproportionately suffering in part
9 due to long-standing, unaddressed health disparities, as well as
10 systematic racism and other socioeconomic inequities. The Black
11 community experiences disproportionately higher rates of
12 homelessness, incarceration, and economic hardships, which
13 exacerbate existing health issues; and

14 Whereas, Michigan's racist history has contributed to the
15 current health disparities that Black Michigan residents
16 experience. Discriminatory lending practices in the 20th century,
17 known as redlining, created segregated communities in Michigan.
18 Black communities were limited to areas with restricted access to
19 healthy foods, clean water, and other essential resources, leading
20 to a variety of other health issues, including reduced life
21 expectancy, higher rates of infant mortality, and higher rates of
22 lead poisoning. In addition, Michigan institutions have
23 demonstrated a disregard for Black lives, as was made evident by
24 the Flint water crisis; and

25 Whereas, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Lieutenant Governor Garlin
26 Gilchrist and Michigan's Chief Medical Executive Dr. Joneigh
27 Khaldun have all publicly condemned the racism embedded in every
28 fabric of our culture, voiced support for peaceful protests to
29 bring issues of racism and bigotry to the forefront, and recognized

1 that racial inequities are directly linked to poor health outcomes
2 in Black Americans; and

3 Whereas, Governor Whitmer signed Executive Order 2020-55 on
4 April 20,2020, which established the Michigan Coronavirus Task
5 Force on Racial Disparities to examine factors that contribute to
6 racial inequities and make policy recommendations on how to
7 meaningfully address them; and

8 Whereas, The privileges that other Americans experience
9 inhibit them from fully understanding how racism impacts citizens
10 of color throughout the country, including here in Michigan. Tasks
11 such as driving, walking, and simply breathing should not result in
12 citizens of color living in constant fear of being harassed,
13 arrested, shot, or killed as a result of racist policing; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives
16 concurring), That we declare that racism is a public health crisis
17 in the state of Michigan and we commit to working collaboratively
18 with the Governor and every sector of society to develop an ongoing
19 strategy to address, fund, and support solutions that strategically
20 reduce the long-term impact that racism has on the quality of life
21 and health for citizens of color in the state of Michigan; and be
22 it further

23 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
24 Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Chief Medical Executive for
25 the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and the
26 Director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.