

Submitter:

Courtney Cox

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3807

Hello, my name is Courtney Cox goes by Cox. She her they them pronouns. I am 30 years old. I have no children, but I care deeply about the mental health and well-being of all people. My background is in mental behavioral health. I currently work as a mental health crisis responder for Portland Street response mental behavioral health is something that I believe is very important and so often I hear from clients is that they had childhood trauma which resulted to later substance use and mental health issues later in life Childhood trauma can come from many different experiences, one of which are racialized harm in school . Last year I saw on an Instagram post from a community leader that black children participating in sports activities were being racially harassed at away games without consequence, being called monkeys and other derogatory terms for Black people just hearing about this reminded me of my own experiences with racialized harm in the school environment. I understand now as an adult, how much those racialized Experience in many ways prevented me from enjoying my childhood as a normal student I had to grow up quickly to protect myself from racialized harm. I believe all children deserve to live out their childhood to the full extent playing with friends, going to away games and having all of those great memories that we all cherish, and that should not be stolen by experiencing racism. Not only are these youth having to experience racism, but they're also having to experience the reality that often times there is no consequence for those who perpetuate racialized harm. this is a very demoralizing fact of the world we live in and I think as an adult, it is our responsibility to protect children so much political rhetoric is around protecting children, but what does that actually look like? I believe it looks like accountability there has to be accountability for racialized harm that youth experience. I am in support of the creation of further protections and accountability efforts in regards to mitigating racialized harm in the future no student should have to worry about being discriminated against when all they really should be thinking about is their three-point shot. Not only is racist behavior unsportsmanlike. It has no place in our school systems or extra activities at all. I'm in support of restorative justice measures to hold youth accountable, but not only the youth but the communities they come from and reeducating, informing and building relationships that change the course of history.

Given that there is so much research on the effects of childhood trauma and later mental behavioral health issues or substance use disorders in the future, we have a public health imperative to ensure that children live full childhood free of trauma. I hope that this bill passes as it is our adult moral duty to protect children. This is one practical way of doing so and I'm proud to add my testimony to this bill.