

**Lisa Cataldi**

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**From:** Shahidah Ali <shahidahali13@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 8, 2025 1:55 PM  
**To:** House Education Committee; Sen. Mack, Tiara T.  
**Subject:** CROWN ACT

Dear Chair Coyne and Members of the State Judicial Committee:

My name is Shahidah Ali, and I live in North Providence, RI.

I wish I could be there today to testify in support of the Crown Act (S519) sponsored by Senator Mack, which would expand the definition of discrimination on the basis of race to include hair texture.

As an African American woman, 57 years old and having felt the pressure and discrimination of wearing my hair in its natural texture has been harmful to myself and racial esteem. It is painful to hear anyone base consideration for employment, graduations or even social extracurriculars like dance on the texture of one's hair. African Americans are an integral part of what America is and having been enslaved people who have worked tirelessly to not only build this country but thrive in this country we deserve to represent our full selves in society without any retributions because of race or hair texture.

- A Black woman's hair is 3.4 times more likely to be seen as unprofessional
- Black women are 30% more likely to be made aware of a formal workplace appearance policy compared to their non-Black counterparts
- Black women are 1.5 times more likely to be sent home from the workplace because of their hair.

It is actually with sadness that this has to be an issue in 2025. Textured hair is not new to this world and it is Godly right to present yourself as the way God made you if that is your choice. No one should be discriminated against over hair. Don't let another generation of children go through life fighting a battle to be who they are.

I strongly support the Crown Act and urge the committee and Legislators to vote favorably, as in other states, in support.

Thank you for your time  
Shahidah S Ali  
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