



# ARISE

April 23rd, 2025

House Bill 5836 – “Our History, Our Schools, Our Future: About Ethnic Studies Bill”

Dear Chair McNamara and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Faith and I am a student in 10th grade. I am also a Youth Leader with ARISE. I am writing to support House Bill No. 5836 because adding Ethnic Studies to be in the curriculum for years to come will benefit all students in school, including White students, which would allow them to understand their peers and where they come from.

In America, when kids reach the age of 5, they are required to attend schools starting with kindergarten. From kindergarten through twelfth grade, we are taught the same recycled textbook definitions of slavery, racism, and other histories that stem mainly from eurocentric points of views. To be eurocentric is prioritizing European culture, history, and perspectives as superior to other cultures. There is no word more perfect than describing the current education system curriculum. Coming from a small country called Liberia in West Africa, I have gotten used to people responding “huh?” when I say I am Liberian. Although, sometimes there is a moment where someone will know my country but the facts would be all wrong. First of all, what is Liberia? Liberia is a country in West Africa that borders Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d’Ivoire. The capital city is named Monrovia after U.S. President James Monroe. It was established as a home in the 19th century for freed slaves and descendants of African Americans who had emigrated. Some say Liberians are not really African because of this fact. I beg to differ. I am sitting here today wondering how many of you know the history of Liberians, the history of my people. My guess is very few considering no one has had proper access to an ethnic studies course. This is why I urge you to support HB5836 bill because my history is worth knowing and peers history should be something I can learn about.

Thank you,

Faith  
10th grade