



Jameelah Rasheed

May 13th, 2021

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation

RE: Support HB 2935 the CROWN Act

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee:

My name is Jameelah Rasheed, and I live in North Portland. I am testifying here today in support of HB 2935.

I am a Black woman, a mother, a daughter, and a fierce advocate for the CROWN Act -- a bill that would create protections for myself and my whole family.

A few months ago, Marissa Martino, a Parkrose student, was forced to cut the beads out of her hair in order to play in her school's volleyball game. As I reflect on that horrible incident, I'm brought back to my own stories growing up. Like the time when it was school picture day, and my mom put my hair in shirley temple curls. My mom said "don't let anybody mess with your hair." And before we took the pictures, my teacher had a comb in her hand and wanted to "fix" my curls, and I said "no." When I came home from school my mom asked what happened. My mom was so pissed when my pictures came back. And my teacher just laughed. I was punished for something I had no control over and this was a person of authority. My mom went up to the school and had some words with the teacher, and that teacher never put her hands back in my hair.

As a Black woman, getting your hair done in a beautiful way makes you feel good about yourself. Sometimes my daughter wears a hijab because my family is Muslim. People are disrespectful to her and ask her invasive questions. I tell my daughter: you have to protect yourself by any means necessary. Doing what I can to pass the CROWN Act means a lot to me, it means a lot to any Black woman, this law will help make us feel protected and cared for.

We need the CROWN Act for ourselves to feel safe, to feel proud of wearing our hair and how we want to wear it. We don't need anybody coming up to us with scissors or anything cutting away our hair, that's taking away the beauty. I don't want anyone to feel how I've felt many times.

To me, passing the CROWN Act will mean freedom, not having to worry about protecting myself due to my hair. Please vote yes and support HB 2935.

Sincerely,

Jameelah Rasheed

Forward Together Action

5020 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd Portland, OR 97211