

I am writing to you today about the CROWN Act to end race-based hair discrimination. Currently, it is legal to discriminate against a person in the workplace or in schools because of their natural or protective hairstyle in all states except for California, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Colorado, Washington, and Maryland.

Black women are 1.5 times more likely to be sent home from the workplace because of their hair, according to a 2019 study. Duke University research found that Black women with locs, twists, or braids were deemed less professional and were less likely to land job interviews. The same race-based hair discrimination is happening to our children in local schools. The impact of hair discrimination has lingering socioeconomic effects, and it's another thread in the fabric of systemic racism that cannot be ignored or dismissed.

I am advocating for a future where my children can participate in all events, from school to work, and not be singled out because of how they wear their hair.

I'm asking that you vote in support of passing the CROWN Act that's in front of you today so Oregon can join the seven states that have already passed the CROWN Act.

Sincerely,
Selamawit Mehary