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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

H. R. No. **1**

1.1 A House resolution

1.2 declaring racism a public health crisis.

1.3 WHEREAS, race is a social construct with no biological basis; and

1.4 WHEREAS, racism is embedded in the foundation of America, beginning with chattel slavery

1.5 in 1619; and

1.6 WHEREAS, much of the Black experience in America has been endured under slavery and

1.7 Jim Crow, which created preferential opportunities for white people while subjecting people of

1.8 color to hardships and disadvantages in every area of life; and

1.9 WHEREAS, public health disparities have persisted for over 400 years and there are

1.10 long-standing, unaddressed disparities as well as systemic racism and other socioeconomic inequities;

1.11 and

1.12 WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association defines racism as a social system with

1.13 multiple dimensions: individual racism is internalized or interpersonal, and systemic racism is

1.14 institutional or structural. Systemic racism is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning

1.15 value based on the social interpretation of how one looks that unfairly disadvantages some individuals

1.16 and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of

1.17 the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

1.18 WHEREAS, racism is complex and it is imperative to employ an intersectional lens and

1.19 approach that considers the unique ways that racism intersects with disabilities, immigration, gender,

1.20 documentation status, and LGBTQ+ communities; and

1.21 WHEREAS, racism causes persistent racial discrimination in housing, education, employment,

1.22 and criminal justice; and

1.23 WHEREAS, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the

1.24 American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists, and the American Public Health Association

2.1 recognize that racism is a social determinant of health that has a profound impact across the lifespan  
2.2 of an individual and that failure to address racism is an urgent public health issue that will exacerbate  
2.3 and perpetuate existing health inequities; and

2.4 WHEREAS, more than 100 studies have linked racism to worse health outcomes; and

2.5 WHEREAS, in Minnesota the highest excess death rates exist for Black and Indigenous  
2.6 communities, at every age demographic; and

2.7 WHEREAS, Minnesota must address persistent disparities in health outcomes and the social,  
2.8 economic, educational, and environmental inequities that contribute to them; and

2.9 WHEREAS, while there is no epidemiologic definition of crisis, the health impact of racism  
2.10 clearly rises to the definition proposed by Sandro Galea: "The problem must affect large numbers  
2.11 of people, it must threaten health over the long-term, and must require the adoption of large-scale  
2.12 solutions"; and

2.13 WHEREAS, racism is a public health crisis affecting our entire state and a comprehensive  
2.14 and intersectional approach is necessary to address the crisis, NOW, THEREFORE,

2.15 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the State of Minnesota that it declares  
2.16 racism a public health crisis; and

2.17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, based upon this affirmation, the Minnesota House of  
2.18 Representatives will actively participate in the dismantling of racism by:

2.19 Collaborating with the state's law and justice agencies and the community to work to ensure  
2.20 public confidence that public safety is administered equitably;

2.21 Studying, evaluating, and conducting an assessment of the existing policies and practices of  
2.22 the Minnesota House of Representatives through an intersectional lens of racial equity, setting  
2.23 measurable goals to advance equity through these policies and practices;

2.24 Conducting an assessment related to all human resources, vendor selection, including  
2.25 reviewing internal processes and practices related to hiring, promotions, and leadership appointments;

2.26 Enhancing data-driven education efforts on understanding, addressing, and dismantling  
2.27 racism, and how racism affects public health, family stability, early childhood education, economic  
2.28 development, public safety, housing, and the delivery of human services;

2.29 Supporting local, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic  
2.30 racism, partnering with local organizations with a demonstrated track record of confronting racism,  
2.31 and meaningfully engaging with communities of color;

2.32 Convening a House Select Committee on Minnesota's response to addressing racism as a  
2.33 public health crisis to ensure House legislative efforts are analyzed through an intersectional race  
2.34 equity lens; and

3.1           Hereby encouraging the Governor and the Senate to also adopt resolutions affirming that  
3.2 racism is a public health crisis resulting in disparities in family stability, health and mental wellness,  
3.3 education, employment, economic development, public safety, criminal justice, and housing.