

## OAFP Condemns All Forms of Racism: Statement Regarding Recent Comments Made by Senator Huffman

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The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians (OAFP) rebukes comments made by Senator Stephen A. Huffman, MD during the June 9, 2020 hearing on Senate Concurrent Resolution 14. The OAFP submitted testimony in support of SCR 14, a resolution to declare racism a public health crisis. Senator Huffman's comments on June 9 were inappropriate, insensitive and not in keeping with the fundamental values that inform and guide the work of the OAFP. The OAFP seeks to ensure that African American Ohioans feel valued and respected as equal members of society. Racism that happens in our country today, and that has happened in our country for centuries, is unacceptable.

The OAFP opposes all forms of institutional racism and supports efforts to actively dismantle racist and discriminatory practices and policies. Racism negatively impacts the health outcomes of our patients. The elimination of health disparities will not be achieved without first acknowledging racism's contribution to health and social inequalities. The COVID-19 pandemic's disproportionately severe impact on communities of color clearly illuminates how systemic racism is a threat to public health. Sadly, the comments of Senator Huffman, a licensed physician, demonstrate how implicit bias and institutional racism are present not only in the halls of the Statehouse but also in health care. We recognize we all must act against the public health crisis that is racism.

In collaboration with our national organization, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and their Center for Diversity and Health Equity, the OAFP plans to host a *Limiting Implicit Bias Training* program in September to promote awareness of implicit bias among the entire health care team and to provide resources for mitigating the negative effects of that bias on patient care. We support the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC) call for Senate and House legislators and staff to immediately take racial equity and implicit bias training.

(<http://www.ohiohouse.gov/house/stephanie-d-howse/press/rep-howse-olbc-responds-to-colored-comment-from-state-senator>)