

**State Headquarters**

2966 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201
Phone 313.578.6800
Fax 313.578.6811
E-mail aclu@aclumich.org
www.aclumich.org

Legislative Office

115 West Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933
Phone 517.372.8503
Fax 517.372.5121
E-mail aclu@aclumich.org
www.aclumich.org

West Michigan Regional Office

1514 Wealthy St. SE, Suite 260
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Phone 616.301.0930
Fax 616.301.0640
Email aclu@aclumich.org
www.aclumich.org

House Criminal Justice Committee**June 6, 2023****Senate Bill 90: Support**

The American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan testifies today in support of Senate Bill 90.

No person should lose their job or be sent home from school for how their hair naturally grows or for how they wear their hair.

Hair discrimination disproportionately affects people of color, particularly Black women. According to a 2023 study conducted by Dove and LinkedIn, Black women’s hair is 2.5 times more likely to be perceived as unprofessional. Many Black women reported changing their hair for an interview, and 41% of those women stated that they changed it from curly to straight.¹

This discrimination does not begin in adulthood; even children are not immune. In a 2021 study, 53% of Black mothers reported their daughters experiencing hair discrimination as young as five years old. Additionally, 81% of Black students in majority-white schools said they “sometimes wish their hair was straight.”²

An individual’s hair has absolutely no impact on their ability to do their job or to learn in school—but racial discrimination certainly does. It is long past time that we recognize that race and racism create situations that are far more complicated than the current statutes provide for. This bill will help protect Black Michiganders who deserve to live and work in their state without fear of discrimination. False and racially exclusionary beliefs about what “professional” hairstyles entail have long been used to discriminate against Black women and girls. This important legislation will make explicit in our state civil rights law that hair discrimination is racial discrimination, and it is illegal. The ACLU of Michigan supports this bill and encourages you to vote yes.

Gabrielle Dresner, Policy Strategist**ACLU of Michigan****gdresner@aclumich.org, (906) 486-4526**

¹ <https://www.thecrownact.com/research-studies>

² *ibid.*