

Wilmington, Delaware
April 2, 2020

#4793

WHEREAS, federal law forbids discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment; and

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Dixon**

WHEREAS, “discrimination” refers to the treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing belongs rather than on individual merit. It could also be defined in the context of civil rights law, as the unfair or unequal treatment of an individual (or group) based on certain characteristics; and

Co-Sponsors:

**Council
President
Shabazz**

WHEREAS, in 2019, The Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Coalition conducted a 2019 study surveying 2,000 working women aged 25 – 64, who are employed in an office setting, or had been employed in a corporate office within the last six months. The findings of this study revealed that African American women are 80 percent more likely to change their natural hair to conform to social norms or expectations at work, and that African-American women's hair is approximately three times more likely to be perceived as unprofessional in the workplace; and

**Council
Members
Oliver
McCoy**

WHEREAS, first introduced in California in January 2019, the CROWN Act expanded the definition of race in the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) and Education Code, to ensure protection in workplaces and in K-12 public and charter schools. The inaugural CROWN Act was signed into law by Governor Newsom in California on July 3rd and went into effect January 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey became the third state to the enact the CROWN Act as Governor Phil Murphy signed the CROWN Act into law on December 19th, the one-year anniversary of the wrestling match where New Jersey high school wrestler Andrew Johnson's locs were forcibly cut off; and

WHEREAS, on December 5th, Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Congressman Cedric Richmond (D-LA) introduced The CROWN Act of 2019 in both chambers of U.S. Congress paving the way for federal protections; and

WHEREAS, the CROWN Act made clear that discrimination based on natural and protective hairstyles associated with people of African descent, including hair that is tightly coiled or tightly curled, locs, cornrows, twists, braids, Bantu knots, and Afros, is a prohibited form of racial or national origin discrimination; and

WHEREAS, Delaware is among more than 23 states who are considering the CROWN Act and have either pre-filed, filed or formally stated an intent to introduce their own anti-hair discrimination bills; and

WHEREAS, over 60% of the population of citizenry of the City of Wilmington are people of color, who may be positively impacted by the State’s recognition of the micro-aggressive nature of hair discrimination in workplaces, schools and wherever other forms of discrimination may also negatively, unfairly and unlawfully impact the lives of Delawareans.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON HEREBY RESOLVES to strongly encourage and support the passing of Senate Bill 192, wherein definitions of “race” and “protective style” are expanded, and makes clear that race also includes traits historically associated with race, including hair texture, including protective styles such as braids, locks and twists. It is the belief that passing Senate Bill 192 will have direct positive effect on the Citizenry of the City of Wilmington.

Passed by City Council,

Attest: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution strongly encourages and supports the passing of Senate Bill 192, wherein definitions of “race” and “protective style” are expanded, and makes clear that race also includes traits historically associated with race, including hair texture, including protective styles such as braids, locs and twists.