

African American Mayors Association (the “Corporation”)

Resolution in Support of the C.R.O.W.N. Act

Sponsored by Mayor Karen Weaver (Flint, MI) and Mayor Lovely Warren (Rochester, NY)

WHEREAS, in August 2018, Clinton Stanely, Jr., a six-year old Florida boy, was turned away from his first day of school because he wore dreadlocks; and

WHEREAS, in August 2018, Faith Fennidy, an eleven-year old girl in Louisiana, was asked to leave class because administrators indicated that her braided hair extensions violated school policy; and

WHEREAS, in January 2019, Andrew Johnson, a 16-year old New Jersey wrestler was forced to cut his dreadlocks to compete in a match; and

WHEREAS, hair texture and protective hairstyles are inherently racial and ethnic characteristics and no person should be discriminated against or denied equal and fair opportunities due to such characteristics; and

WHEREAS, to prevent such discrimination, on July 3, 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsome signed California Senate Bill 188, the Crown Act: Creating a Respectful and Open Workplace for Natural Hair, into law; and

WHEREAS, the Crown Act provides that California laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race would also provide that the definition of race for these purposes also include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles, and would define protective hairstyles for purposes of implementing the law; and

WHEREAS, on July 15, 2019, New York Governor Cuomo signed S6209A/A7797A, which amended New York State’s Human Right Law and the Dignity for Students Act to provide that the definition of race used in existing law, includes traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles; and

WHEREAS, mayors have a vested interest in preventing discrimination based on race and ethnicity, particularly, for people of color who have historically been marginalized and denied equal opportunities based on their hair style or hair texture; and

WHEREAS, the Corporation finds it is in its best interest, and in the best interests of its represented communities, to laud the passage of the California and New York laws and to encourage the passage of similar legislation on both the state and federal levels; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Corporation urges mayors across the country to work with state representatives and Members of Congress in the development and passage of laws that prevent discrimination on the basis of hair texture and protective styles and to expand the definition of racial discrimination in all applicable existing laws to include hair texture and protective styles.