

Senate File 318 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 318

BY KNOX

A BILL FOR

1 An Act prohibiting discrimination based on an individual's
2 texture or style of hair.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 8A.416, Code 2025, is amended by adding
2 the following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 8. For purposes of this section, "*race*"
4 means the same as defined in section 216.2.

5 Sec. 2. Section 15A.1, subsection 1, paragraph b, Code 2025,
6 is amended to read as follows:

7 b. For purposes of **this chapter**, ~~"*economic development*":~~

8 (1) "*Economic development*" means private or joint public
9 and private investment involving the creation of new jobs and
10 income or the retention of existing jobs and income that would
11 otherwise be lost.

12 (2) "*Race*" means the same as defined in section 216.2.

13 Sec. 3. Section 19B.1, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
14 following new subsection:

15 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. "*Race*" means the same as defined in
16 section 216.2.

17 Sec. 4. Section 216.2, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
18 following new subsections:

19 NEW SUBSECTION. 13A. "*Natural or protective hairstyle*"
20 includes but is not limited to braids, locs, twists, tight
21 coils or curls, cornrows, bantu knots, afros, and headwraps.

22 NEW SUBSECTION. 16A. "*Race*" is a grouping of humans based
23 upon physical traits commonly or historically associated with a
24 group including but not limited to skin color, hair texture,
25 hair type, or a natural or protective hairstyle.

26 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 216.23 **Equal rights under the law.**

27 1. A person in the state of Iowa shall not be excluded from
28 participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected
29 to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving
30 state financial assistance, based on the person's natural
31 or protective hairstyle, race, creed, color, sex, sexual
32 orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion,
33 ancestry, or disability.

34 2. A person in the state of Iowa shall not be subjected to
35 a practice prohibited under 42 U.S.C. §1981(c), based on the

1 person's natural or protective hairstyle, race, creed, color,
2 sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin,
3 religion, ancestry, or disability.

4 Sec. 6. Section 256.2, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
5 following new subsection:

6 NEW SUBSECTION. 3A. "Race" means the same as defined in
7 section 216.2.

8 Sec. 7. Section 256B.2, subsection 1, Code 2025, is amended
9 by adding the following new paragraph:

10 NEW PARAGRAPH. 0b. "Race" means the same as defined in
11 section 216.2.

12 Sec. 8. Section 256E.2, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
13 following new subsection:

14 NEW SUBSECTION. 6A. "Race" means the same as defined in
15 section 216.2.

16 Sec. 9. Section 256F.2, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
17 following new subsection:

18 NEW SUBSECTION. 6A. "Race" means the same as defined in
19 section 216.2.

20 Sec. 10. Section 261A.4, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
21 following new subsection:

22 NEW SUBSECTION. 17. "Race" means the same as defined in
23 section 216.2.

24 Sec. 11. Section 279.58, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
25 following new subsection:

26 NEW SUBSECTION. 3. a. The board of directors of a school
27 district shall not adopt, for the district or for an individual
28 school within the district, a dress code policy that prohibits
29 students from wearing natural or protective hairstyles that are
30 commonly or historically associated with a race.

31 b. For purposes of this subsection, "race" means the same as
32 defined in section 216.2.

33 Sec. 12. Section 280.2, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
34 following new subsection:

35 NEW SUBSECTION. 3. "Race" means the same as defined in

1 section 216.2.

2 Sec. 13. Section 341A.1, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
3 following new subsection:

4 NEW SUBSECTION. 4. "*Race*" means the same as defined in
5 section 216.2.

6 Sec. 14. Section 400.17, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
7 following new subsection:

8 NEW SUBSECTION. 5. For the purposes of this section, "*race*"
9 means the same as defined in section 216.2.

10 Sec. 15. Section 602.1401, Code 2025, is amended by adding
11 the following new subsection:

12 NEW SUBSECTION. 7. For the purposes of this section, "*race*"
13 means the same as defined in section 216.2.

14 Sec. 16. Section 729.4, Code 2025, is amended by adding the
15 following new subsection:

16 NEW SUBSECTION. 4. For the purposes of this section, "*race*"
17 means the same as defined in section 216.2.

18 EXPLANATION

19 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
20 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

21 This bill provides an additional prohibition against
22 discrimination in schools, workplaces, housing, places of
23 public accommodations, and other contexts on the basis of hair
24 texture, hair type, and natural or protective hairstyles that
25 are historically and commonly associated with race.

26 The following current Code sections prohibit discrimination
27 based on race: Code section 8A.416 (state employment), Code
28 section 15A.1 (state disbursement of grant funds), Code section
29 19B.1 (state employment and contracts), Code chapter 216 (civil
30 rights commission), Code chapter 256 (department of education),
31 Code chapter 256B (area education agencies), Code chapter 256E
32 (charter schools), Code chapter 256F (charter schools and
33 innovation zone schools), Code chapter 261A (higher education
34 loan authority), Code section 279.58 (school directors), Code
35 chapter 280 (uniform school requirements), Code section 341A.1

1 (civil service for deputy county sheriffs), Code section
2 400.17 (employees under civil service), Code section 602.1401
3 (judicial personnel), and Code section 729.4 (fair employment
4 practices). The bill further provides that an individual
5 cannot be discriminated against for state assistance programs
6 and that no person in Iowa shall be subjected to a practice
7 prohibited under 42 U.S.C. §1981(c), based upon the person's
8 natural or protective hairstyle, race, creed, color, sex,
9 sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion,
10 ancestry, or disability.

11 The bill provides that discrimination on the basis of
12 race includes discrimination on the basis of natural or
13 protective hairstyles. The bill defines "natural or protective
14 hairstyles" to include but is not limited to braids, locs,
15 twists, tight coils or curls, cornrows, bantu knots, afros, and
16 headwraps.