



Merrie Najimy, President

Max Page, Vice President

Lisa Gallatin, Executive Director-Treasurer

July 17, 2020

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz
House Committee on Ways and Means
Massachusetts State House, Room 243

The Honorable Claire Cronin
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Massachusetts State House, Room 136

Dear Chairs Michlewitz and Cronin:

We write to you on behalf of the Massachusetts Teachers Association regarding S.2820, *An Act to reform police standards and shift resources to build a more equitable, fair and just commonwealth that values Black lives and communities of color*. While the MTA continues to analyze the details of this legislation, we are in strong support of the historic steps it takes toward dismantling systems of racism and white supremacy inside our public institutions that have for too long devalued, dehumanized and criminalized Black and brown lives.

As educators, we see the impacts of institutional and structural racism every day in our classrooms and on our campuses. The legacy of disinvestment in public schools and colleges has denied far too many students of color their right to equal educational opportunities and has only widened the racial inequities in our society. The House and Senate rightfully acknowledged the racial disparities in public preK-12 schools by passing the *Student Opportunity Act*. Yet we know now more than ever that still more work must be done to deconstruct systemic racism in public education and in all public institutions.

We understand that many of the changes needed to truly address systemic racism will not be easy. This moment demands that we take meaningful steps to address this issue now, and the MTA stands ready to partner with you in this effort in the days and weeks ahead.

Thank you for your attention to this vitally important issue.

Sincerely,

Merrie Najimy
President

Max Page
Vice President