

By Administrator

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During a Board of Education debate about proposed changes to social studies standards, that would have teachers discuss the country's history of racism and discrimination, Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson said: "The system of government that we have in this nation is not systematically racist" and that "the standards would inaccurately teach that the United States is a racist nation."

In response, NCDP First Vice Chair Bobbie Richardson, Senator Gladys Robinson, and Representative Rosa Gill - African-American women with education backgrounds - released the following statements.

"As a Black woman and lifelong educator, I am alarmed by Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson's deeply insensitive comments," said NCDP First Vice Chair Bobbie Richardson. "His sentiments fly in the face of the continued inequities people of color face every day in our society. As many have said before me, if we do not remember our history, we are bound to repeat it. Teaching our children the painful past of our country is a necessary and important step in the fight for racial equality and creating that more perfect union we strive to be."

"Systemic racism is very real," said Senator Gladys Robinson. "As a PTA parent, I fought against unequal punishment of black boys for the same offense, as white boys, yet leaders refused to recognize their racial and cultural biases. As a member of the Board of Governors, I fought to make sure our state's historically Black colleges and universities received the funding and accreditation they deserved, and there still remains major disparities between our HBCUs and their white counterparts. But these are just some of the many inequities that exist today. Attempting to erase our country's fraught past will do nothing to move us toward a more equal and just world. It's past time for us to teach and speak the truth -- our children will be better citizens and absolutely better leaders."

"From participating in the civil rights movement in the sixties, to teaching math in my classrooms, I have spent my whole life working to ensure every child has an equal chance to thrive, and I can say without a doubt that the Lieutenant Governor's comments are absurd," said Representative Rosa Gill. "We cannot shelter our students from the ugly reality that racism has torn this country apart. In order to make progress, we must educate and address these inequities openly and directly."