

Thank you Madam Chair.

As an African descendant in the US, I come before you standing on the shoulders of my ancestors with permission from my elders both present and behind prison walls. I speak, With respect and a desire for understanding.

Our ancestors were kidnapped from their homeland and brought to stolen land, forcibly removed from their families and culture. The US has benefited greatly from the wombs of my grandmothers, aunties, and cousins, generations of our labor and sacrifice.

Oppression and violence continue to be imposed on our community, in the US and globally. We face a systemic racial caste system that has persisted through various forms, including slavery, Jim Crow (apartheid)), the war on drugs, and mass incarceration.

As a result, we have generations of children growing up without the wisdom of their elders in a school-to-prison pipeline that is perpetuating the cycle of poverty and violence. Our community is overly surveilled and lacks access to basic necessities such as adequate housing, education, and healthcare. We need more than diversity and inclusion or a job.

We believe, as our esteemed ancestress Callie House in 1896, that reparations are necessary to address the devastating harm that continues. Your support in creating a more just and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity for self-determination and liberation includes a commitment to addressing, discontinuing and repairing the continuous harm. Our recommendations are: full and total Reparations. A special rapporteur on African diasporic maternal health, and a permanent forum on African diasporic women. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.