By the Committee on Community Affairs; and Senator Bracy

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to prohibited discrimination; providing a short title; amending s. 420.516, F.S.; providing that it is unlawful for sponsors under the Florida Housing Finance Corporation Act to discriminate against any person or family because of traits historically associated with race; reordering and amending s. 760.02, F.S.; defining the terms “protective hairstyle” and “race”; amending s. 1000.21, F.S.; defining the terms “protective hairstyle” and “race”; reenacting s. 420.5087(6)(i), F.S., relating to the State Apartment Incentive Loan Program, to incorporate the amendments made to s. 420.516, F.S.; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the history of our nation has been riddled with laws and societal norms that equated “blackness” and its associated physical traits as inferior to European physical features, and

WHEREAS, this idea also permeates a societal understanding of professionalism that was, and still is, closely linked to European features and mannerisms and which entails that those who do not naturally conform to Eurocentric norms must alter their appearance to meet such norms and be considered professional, and

WHEREAS, hair has been, and remains, a rampant source of racial discrimination that has caused serious economic and health ramifications, and

WHEREAS, workplace and school dress code policies that
prohibit natural hair, including afros, and certain hairstyles, such as braids, twists, and locks, have a disparate impact on black individuals as these policies are more likely to burden or punish black employees and students compared to other groups, and

WHEREAS, federal courts accept that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, and therefore protects against discrimination against afros, and

WHEREAS, afros are not the only natural presentation of black hair because black hair can also be naturally presented in styles such as braids, twists, and locks, NOW, THEREFORE,

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. This act may be cited as the “Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act” or “CROWN Act.”

Section 2. Section 420.516, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

420.516 Discrimination prohibited.—It is an unlawful practice for a sponsor, while bonds are outstanding for the purpose of funding or financing the sponsor’s project, to discriminate against any person or family because of race as defined in s. 760.02, color, religion, sex, national origin, or marital status.

Section 3. Section 760.02, Florida Statutes, is reordered and amended to read:

760.02 Definitions.—For the purposes of ss. 760.01-760.11, 760.23, 760.25, and 509.092, the term:

(7) “Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992” means ss. 760.01-
“Commission” means the Florida Commission on Human Relations created by s. 760.03.

“Commissioner” or “member” means a member of the commission.


“National origin” includes ancestry.

“Person” includes an individual, association, corporation, joint apprenticeship committee, joint-stock company, labor union, legal representative, mutual company, partnership, receiver, trust, trustee in bankruptcy, or unincorporated organization; any other legal or commercial entity; the state; or any governmental entity or agency.

“Employer” means any person employing 15 or more employees for each working day in each of 20 or more calendar weeks in the current or preceding calendar year, and any agent of such a person.

“Employment agency” means any person regularly undertaking, with or without compensation, to procure employees for an employer or to procure for employees opportunities to work for an employer, and includes an agent of such a person.

“Protective hairstyle” includes, but is not limited to, hairstyles such as braids, locks, or twists.

“Labor organization” means any organization that exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of collective bargaining or of dealing with employers concerning grievances, terms or conditions of employment, or other mutual aid or protection in connection with employment.
“Aggrieved person” means any person who files a complaint with the Florida Commission on Human Relations.

“Race” is inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, and protective hairstyles.

“Public accommodations” means places of public accommodation, lodgings, facilities principally engaged in selling food for consumption on the premises, gasoline stations, places of exhibition or entertainment, and other covered establishments. Each of the following establishments which serves the public is a place of public accommodation within the meaning of this section:

(a) Any inn, hotel, motel, or other establishment that provides lodging to transient guests, other than an establishment located within a building that contains not more than four rooms for rent or hire and that is actually occupied by the proprietor of such establishment as his or her residence.

(b) Any restaurant, cafeteria, lunchroom, lunch counter, soda fountain, or other facility principally engaged in selling food for consumption on the premises, including, but not limited to, any such facility located on the premises of any retail establishment, or any gasoline station.

(c) Any motion picture theater, theater, concert hall, sports arena, stadium, or other place of exhibition or entertainment.

(d) Any establishment that is physically located within the premises of any establishment otherwise covered by
this subsection, or within the premises of which is physically located any such covered establishment, and that which holds itself out as serving patrons of such covered establishment.

Section 4. Subsections (9) and (10) are added to section 1000.21, Florida Statutes, to read:

1000.21 Systemwide definitions.—As used in the Florida K-20 Education Code:

(9) “Protective hairstyle” includes, but is not limited to, hairstyles such as braids, locks, or twists.

(10) “Race” is inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, and protective hairstyles.

Section 5. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 420.516, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, paragraph (i) of subsection (6) of section 420.5087, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

420.5087 State Apartment Incentive Loan Program.—There is hereby created the State Apartment Incentive Loan Program for the purpose of providing first, second, or other subordinated mortgage loans or loan guarantees to sponsors, including for-profit, nonprofit, and public entities, to provide housing affordable to very-low-income persons.

(6) On all state apartment incentive loans, except loans made to housing communities for the elderly to provide for lifesafety, building preservation, health, sanitation, or security-related repairs or improvements, the following provisions shall apply:

(i) The discrimination provisions of s. 420.516 shall apply to all loans.
Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.