

A Better Wisconsin Together: As Black History Month comes to a close, the fight for racial equity continues

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MADISON, Wis. — Black History Month 2022 was a month in which we honored black history and reckoned with current inequities and challenges faced by Black Americans. We worked on building a future that recognizes and uplifts the invaluable contributions and countless investments made by Black leaders in our local communities.

Over the past 28 days, many of us explored and reflected on Black history – but to make the Badger state a safer, better place for all Wisconsinites, it's important to take it a step further by delivering on our racial justice and equity efforts not just in February, but all year long.

“We can take action year-round by supporting, listening to, and amplifying Black leaders around us, and by having tough but necessary conversations with our friends, family, and community,” commented Chris Walloch, executive director of A Better Wisconsin Together. “In order to see tangible change, we have to be intentional, 365 days a year, about things like the way we spend our time, our money, and our vote.”

“While many of us have personal goals and intentional plans for holding ourselves accountable and making our local communities more equitable for people of all races and backgrounds, there are lawmakers and politicians in Wisconsin who actively want to disrupt that,” Walloch continued.

A handful of right-wing legislators in our state are pushing legislation that would ban schools from teaching a comprehensive view of America's history, a vital curriculum that outlines the real, yet hard truths of our country's past.

If they succeed, it would be illegal to teach students in Wisconsin about the harms of racism and would give politicians in Wisconsin the power to remove vital funding from school districts who talk about race when teaching our nation's history.

"Together, by voting in local elections, communicating with our legislators about the equitable Wisconsin we want to see, and supporting organizations who are laying the groundwork, we can jumpstart progressive movement on the issues and make it clear to our elected leaders that we must not erase Black history, from our schools or anywhere else," said Walloch. "The fight for equity is a fight to ensure liberty and justice for every American, regardless of skin color, zip code, or background. The fight is year-long and we cannot choose to disengage from Black history come March."

In addition to calling your legislators to demand racial equity in Wisconsin, check out this list of Black owned businesses in the Badger state, organized by region, that you can support year-round: <https://act.abwt.org/go/8648?-t=17&akid=4316%2E24676%2EIrRone>.