

April 20, 2026

President Tyisha Walker-Myers
Board of Alders, City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510

Re: Letter of Support: Board of Alders Item Authorizing Predevelopment and Planning for an HBCU Presence in New Haven, CT

Dear President Walker-Myers and Members of the Board of Alders,

My name is Latisha Douglas, and I am a New Haven, CT resident, homeowner, and the mother of a junior in high school who is actively exploring her college options, with a strong interest in attending an HBCU. I am writing to offer my personal support for the City of New Haven's proposed partnership with the CT HBCU Alumni Network to explore the establishment of an HBCU presence here in Connecticut.

This past week, my daughter and I spent time visiting HBCUs across Virginia, Washington D.C., Maryland, and Delaware. It was an extraordinary experience, one that reinforced everything we had heard about the sense of community, academic excellence, and cultural affirmation that these institutions provide. My daughter was inspired at every stop. But at one point during our travels, she turned to me and asked "Why isn't there one in Connecticut?" That question stayed with me. And when I learned of this initiative, I understood immediately why it matters.

Not every student should have to choose between the transformative HBCU experience and staying close to the community that raised them. This initiative has the potential to change that equation for an entire generation of Connecticut students.

I also bring a professional perspective to this conversation. In my work in data and infrastructure, and through my involvement in real estate development and affordable housing in Connecticut, I have seen how anchor institutions shape neighborhoods, create opportunity pipelines, and generate lasting economic impact. A thoughtfully developed HBCU presence in New Haven would not only serve students. It would strengthen the city and the broader region.

My daughter is watching. So are thousands of other young people in this state who deserve to see their leaders take this seriously.

I respectfully urge this Board to vote in favor of this item and help bring this vision one step closer to reality.

Sincerely,

Latisha Douglas

New Haven, Connecticut