



The AAPI Democratic Club of Prince George's County is writing in support of Maryland Senate Bill 462 for an expanded and inclusive American history in Maryland Social Studies Curriculum for our public schools.

The Asian American Pacific Democratic Club of Prince George's County ("AAPIDCPGC") is a political advocacy club chartered to promote, support, and advance the interests of the Asian American Pacific Islander community in Prince George's County and the State of Maryland. Our mission is to ensure the inclusion of Asian American and Pacific Islander's interests and leadership in all aspects of the political process.

An Expanded American History curriculum is important for many reasons, however, here are the main reasons that we support Senate Bill 462:

"For all students, the ability to learn about the experiences and viewpoints of people of color and America's legacy of racism is critical to feeling connected and equally valued in a participatory society." [A Response to the Attacks on Social Studies Education in State Legislatures and Local Boards of Education | Social Studies](#)

- All students have the right to learn and benefit from the accurate representation of historical events.
- History is taught as a means to learn. When we have the opportunity to learn our full history, we also have the opportunity to learn from our full history. Expanded history curriculum provides the foundation to prevent the mistakes of our history from being repeated.
- Recognizing and learning about the roles that different communities have had as an important part of the American fabric throughout U.S. history is of utmost importance as it helps to spread awareness, foster compassion and empathy, and humanize each other's stories.
- Diversity benefits everyone. When we learn about others, whether it is their cultures, their history, or their stories, we humanize people and groups of people who have been historically othered. In learning about African American, Hispanic American, American Indian, or Women's history, we are provided the tools and opportunity to bridge divides even within diverse communities that are typically lumped together.
  - Learning about others is an essential tool to combat hate and racial bias.
  - Learning about others can help to dispel stereotypes and common misconceptions about others.
- History can provide an example of what to do. The study of historical figures who have had a positive impact on our communities should be acknowledged, studied, and celebrated.
- Providing expanded American history prepares our students to think broadly because American history does not exist in a vacuum independent of the world.
- **Representation Matters. All students deserve to see themselves in our history books. Our history books must reflect the full history of the students reading them.**

Specific to the Asian American history aspect of Expanded American History Curriculum, it is important to our organization because:



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- Including Asian Americans in our American History will dispel the perpetual foreigner myth which continues to plague our communities to this day. Asian Americans have been part of the U.S. History from the late 1700's and yet we continue to see incidents where Asian Americans are told to "go back to where you came from";
- Asian American history will dispel the myth that our communities are the "model minority" community. Asian Americans are not a monolith. A proper recount of our histories in the United States will provide opportunity to see the vast diversity of these communities that are too often lumped into one bucket. It is important to note the socio-economic diversity and ethnically heterogeneous communities that fall under AAPI should include Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.
- Learning about Asian American history is important in chipping away harmful stereotypes about our communities and will help to combat the rise in anti-Asian Hate that we have seen increase across our country today.
- While not always easy to digest, our full American history must be part of our social studies curriculum to prevent a repetition of these awful events in our history. In the context of the Asian American experience, starting in the late 1870's through the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and beyond, there has been a history of mob violence & slaughter, expulsions, and government discrimination against Asian Americans. In 1942, a whole class of humans were incarcerated for simply being Japanese American. We must not allow mistakes in our American history to be repeated.
- A more robust and inclusive American history curriculum will help all communities to learn more about each other, fostering intercommunity empathy and understanding among groups of people that potentially carry with them generations of historical tensions, trauma, stereotypes, and misunderstandings.

As we have seen the rise in hate and violence in minority communities, the continued dismissal of under-represented communities' issues, and the systemic oppression of communities of color and marginalized groups, it is of utmost importance that our students are provided a full, expanded, inclusive, and restorative history curriculum. This will equip them with the proper tools to bridge divides between communities, to build compassion and empathy for others, and to ensure that the painful aspects of our history are not repeated. We can fight and combat hate together and in solidarity with one another.

We hope you will stand in solidarity with our organization and find a favorable outcome for Senate Bill 462.

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