

Testimony in **SUPPORT of Senate Bill 304**
Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
February 3, 2022
1:00 PM ET

Presented to: Paul G. Pinsky, Chairman
By: Lanlan Xu

FAVORABLE

I urge a **favorable report on SB 304**, which would require the State Board of Education to develop curriculum for units of instruction on Asian American history in public schools in Maryland. This bill would lead to the development of a statewide curriculum that better reflects Asian American experiences and contributions, in Maryland and our region, while allowing local boards to determine the amount of instruction and implementation of these standards.

Unfortunately, there are numerous examples of anti-Asian hate in our country's history. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we are witnessing a spike of anti-Asian violence across the country. From March 19, 2020 to September 30, 2021, Stop AAPI Hate documented [10,370 hate incidents](#). These violent attacks are just the tip of the iceberg. Racism, xenophobia and discrimination are widely felt among AAPI communities. Xenophobia and racism are fueled by rampant ignorance of AAPIs as an integral part of American society, and ignorance is the soil in which hate grows. We must combat hate by changing the dominant narrative.

Education can be an effective and important tool to combat the racism that fuels this hate and misunderstanding. It is important to diversify and update our educational curriculum to better reflect various contributions and experiences of groups who have not been fully represented in the past. The contributions of Asians to American history are taught incompletely, if at all, throughout our state's schools. SB 304 seeks to address this problem by ensuring that a unit of Asian American history is taught at least once during elementary, middle and high school.

SB 304 provides a pathway to raise the voices of individuals and communities that have not been fully heard in the past, and show that those lives and histories matter. The addition of Asian American history to the curriculum is critical to change discriminatory perceptions that persist in our country. This bill gives the students of Maryland a chance to appreciate a more complete history of our state and nation, which includes the contributions and struggles of Asian Americans.

Therefore, I urge a **favorable report on SB 304**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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