



SUPPORT - HB 47 - Public Schools – Expanded American History – Development of Content Standards and Implementation

The Maryland Legislative Asian American and Pacific Islander Caucus (AAPIC Caucus) strongly supports HB47- Expanded American History. Maryland’s current content standards for curriculum overlook important groups of Americans. This list of groups includes all of the official Maryland legislative caucus as well as a category for American Indians (as currently phrased in the Education article), and a catch-all category for the State Board and MSDE to utilize if appropriate.

We are told that those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it, but many Maryland students are not learning the lessons of our past from all perspectives. The Asian American community helped to build this country and the great grandchildren of their decedents deserve to learn about their accomplishments, as all other Americans learn about their European heritage.

Under HB 47, the State Board of Education would be charged to create expanded social studies standards with the input from Local School Systems and their school boards. County boards and local schools will then adopt age-appropriate standards in line with the State’s standards. The new standards will include lessons on the contributions of African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Hispanic Americans, women, and other groups. There is a growing need for Maryland students to receive factual and well-rounded education in American History. In a free society and democracy all of our constituents deserve to hear the full ungarnished expand American history.

Moreover, this bill is not prescriptive, it is a baseline of history to get the full spectrum of our American melting pot, which makes us an exceptional and indispensable nation more than any other factor. The state of Maryland is the correct jurisdictional level to set these educational redlines, because the state sets the curriculum standards.

Our nation's motto is still, "***Out of Many, One.***" We are collectively great because individual groups came together to build this country. This legislation is about addition (as the title is "Expanded American History"). There is no proposal for a subtraction of American History. We only divide against each other when we fail to recognize each other's humanity. Understanding begins with history lessons.

Expanded American history is about our collective experience as a nation, without leaving out important chapters because they spoil an imagined projection of a perfect past, when many groups were ostracized, ignored, and ridiculed. Our past belongs to all of us, and we all must have the same facts to draw from to decide our collective future. The Asian American and Pacific Islander community wants a full American history taught to their children, and all Maryland public school children, so that our collective achievements are recognized by all of society.

For these reasons, the AAPI Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 47.