



February 23, 2022

Honorable Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary  
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee  
House Office Building, Room 131  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB922 Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement**

Dear Chair Vanessa Atterbeary and House Ways and Means Committee Members:

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, I thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB922 entitled Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement lead sponsored by Delegates Kriselda Valderrama and Lily Qi. CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization.

Over the past year, Maryland has joined other states in experiencing a disturbing rise in anti-Asian hate crimes and bias motivated incidents prompted in part by racist conspiracy theories about Asian communities. These include an Asian American woman attacked while jogging in Howard County, Asian-American owned businesses targeted by vandalism and burglary, and a report of an Asian woman in her 50s struck in the face by an unknown assailant.

My organization expressed solidarity with the Asian American community earlier this month after the release of a new report, published by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, indicating that anti-Asian hate crimes spiked 339 percent in 2021.<sup>1</sup> Last week, CAIR's national office called on Washington, D.C. officials to address the spike in anti-Asian hate.<sup>2</sup>

We stand in solidarity with all those challenging antisemitism, anti-Black racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, white supremacy, and other forms of bigotry. Asian American communities have played an important role in our nation. Misrepresentations and stereotypes are inappropriate, harmful and do injustice to their legacy and contributions.

This bill would require the Maryland State Board of Education to develop curriculum content standards that include Asian American history for public schools. Mandating this will help ensure a more balanced and equitable portrayal of Asian Americans through the use of proper education, and help circumvent some of the bias and racism that leads to hate crimes.

Therefore, we respectfully urge a favorable report on HB922.

Sincerely,

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Council on American-Islamic Relations  
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References:

1. **CAIR Expresses Solidarity with AAPI Community After Report that Anti-Asian Hate Crimes Spiked 339 Percent Last Year** [https://www.cair.com/press\\_releases/cair-expresses-solidarity-with-aapi-community-after-report-that-anti-asian-hate-crimes-spiked-339-percent-last-year/](https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-expresses-solidarity-with-aapi-community-after-report-that-anti-asian-hate-crimes-spiked-339-percent-last-year/)
2. **CAIR Calls on D.C. Officials to Address Spike in Anti-Asian Hate** [https://www.cair.com/press\\_releases/cair-calls-on-d-c-officials-to-address-spike-in-anti-asian-hate/](https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-calls-on-d-c-officials-to-address-spike-in-anti-asian-hate/)