



哈維中文學校

Howard County Chinese School

<http://hccs-md.org>

Testimony in **SUPPORT of House Bill960**
Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement

House Ways and Means Committee

March 1, 2023

1:00 PM ET

Presented to: Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chairman

By: Ming Li, Chair, Board of Director, Howard County Chinese School

FAVORABLE

Established in 1998, Howard County Chinese School, or HCCS, is a non-profit organization located in Howard County Maryland. Its mission is to advance Chinese language education, foster cultural inheritance, and promote community wellbeing, civic engagement, as well as collaboration with other racial/ethnic communities to advance racial equity and achieve sustainable growth in Howard County, State of Maryland, and beyond.

HCCS urges a **favorable report on HB 960**, 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.

Hate and crimes against Asian American Pacific Islander, or AAPI, communities have risen scarcely since the COVID-19 pandemic. What is more disturbing is the hate rhetoric against AAPI started from young students in the public school classrooms. Cases include one HCPSS elementary student screamed “No Chinese” in a music class while the class was studying a Chinese music piece; and a couple of kids commented “I hate Chinese” while the HCCS July 4th parade group passed by them in Clarksville, MD.

Often AAPI are not recognized as Americans. The History Channel regards the AAPI history as “Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have played vital roles in shaping the nation—from building the Transcontinental Railroad, to advocating for labor law changes, to fighting in multiple wars. They made these contributions while also facing persistent discrimination and violence throughout U.S. history.”

The under-representation of AAPI history is the major root cause of racism that fuels hate and crimes against AAPI communities. The racism against Black, Latino and other ethnic groups stem from the same inadequacy of their history in the US. HB 960 will diversify and update the public school curriculum to better reflect various contributions and experiences of groups who have not been fully represented in the past. HB 960 seeks to address this ignorance by ensuring that a unit of Asian American history is taught at least once during elementary, middle and high school.

HB 960 offers 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.

We encourage the introduction of similar bills that promote underrepresented histories in US history.

We urge a **favorable report on HB 960**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ming Li, Ph.D

On behalf of the Howard County Chinese School