



Hearing Date: March 1, 2023

**Testimony on HB960 – POSITION- FAVORABLE
Education – Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement**

**To: Chair Atterbeary and Members, House Ways and Means Committee
From: The Jewish Community Relations Council, Howard County, MD
Betsy Singer and Laura Salganik, Co-Chairs**

The JCRC of Howard County is submitting this testimony in support of HB960 because we have worked closely with the Asian American community over the past several years. We have jointly represented and supported our communities as we advance cooperation and understanding through educational and cultural activities, often through the Howard County Public School System.

This important bill would require the State Board of Education to develop curriculum materials for units of instruction on Asian American history that would then be taught in every public school in Maryland. There is a need for a more inclusive statewide curriculum that better reflects Asian American experiences and contributions, in Maryland and in our region. This bill also allows for flexibility so that each of the twenty-four local boards of education can determine the specific amount of instruction necessary for the implementation of these standards.

All too often there are negative comments and/or action taken or directed at Asian students in the public schools. This negativity is frequently based on a lack of knowledge or understanding and preconceived notions or prejudice. An effective way to limit or end these types of occurrences is through a comprehensive curriculum, as proposed in HB960.

We believe that through a comprehensive statewide curriculum, all students in the Maryland Public Schools system can become better informed about Asian American history, the contributions of Asian Americans, and the role of Asian Americans in the ongoing development of our Nation.

We believe that through the comprehensive curriculum that HB960 would establish, an educational aspect could be presented that would provide accurate and historically correct information that could reduce, and hopefully, eliminate, prejudices toward Asian Americans. **Therefore, we urge a FAVORABLE report on HB960.**