

Committees: Ways and Means

Testimony on: HB960 Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement

Position: Favorable

27 February 2023

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and the members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Isabel Gieser and I support the HB960 bill that would require the K-12 curriculum to include courses on Asian American history.

At my high school in Montgomery County, I have noticed that the history classes offered have not provided sufficient education about Asian Americans.

At Bethesda-Chevy Chase High, there is only one elective course on APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American) studies. I wanted to take it next year to educate myself on pertinent information that has been left out of my United States and Modern World History classes. Even though I had signed up for the class, I recently learned that it is not being taught at BCC during the 2023-2024 school year. Not enough students requested it on their schedules, so it therefore will not be available at all.

Maryland is a diverse state which I am proud to live in as an Asian American. I believe it is imperative that this cultural diversity within our area is both further recognized as well as implemented into the education of our students. I would love to see Asian American students like myself learn about the past of our people and honor the lives of those who brought us here today. The history of Asian Americans should be an essential part of any K-12 education as it enriches not only my learning experience but also places into context my Asian American heritage for my fellow students and myself.

I respectfully request a favorable vote on HB960.

Thank you,

Isabel Gieser

Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School

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