

**Committees:** Ways and Means

**Testimony:** HB1363

Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement

**Position:** Favorable

28 February 2024

Good afternoon, Madam Chair, Vice Chair, and the members of the Ways and Means Committee; my name is Dr. William Reid, and I am a life-long Frederick, Maryland resident. I am a leader with Progressive Maryland, chair of Frederick County Progressives, and a representative of the Asian American Center of Frederick, ACLU-MD, The Nigerians in Frederick, and Resources for Immigrant Support and Empowerment of Western Maryland. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill (HB) 1363, "Education-Public Schools, Asian American History Curriculum Requirement".

In general, this proposed legislation requires each county board of education to develop curriculum content instruction standards on Asian American history in our schools' K-12 curriculum and the implementation of these standards beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. Furthermore, we urge the HB1363 sponsors and the sponsor of HB 50, "Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education," to develop unified legislation.

Including the contributions of Asian Americans and other racial and ethnic marginalized groups in our schools' K-12 history curriculum is at the heart of what Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) should be in all Maryland public schools. Frederick, Maryland, high schools have had increased incidences of violence targeted at marginalized groups. These incidents are likely a consequence of unfamiliarity with cultural diversity, racism, and xenophobia. Expanding the high school history curriculum to teach students about the contributions made by minorities to the growth and prosperity of the United States could help stem violence targeting marginalized groups in our public schools.

I am a retired scientist from the National Institutes of Health and have also worked in the field of secondary and post-secondary education for over thirty years. My experiences have made me aware of the need for DEI in both public primary and secondary education regarding teaching the complete and accurate historical contribution of all groups that contributed to the formation of the United States of America.

We appreciate your favorable support of HB 1363.