

Committees: Ways and Means

Testimony on: HB1363 Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement

Position: Favorable

26 February 2024

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

As a student at Georgetown University and a proud member of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, I am writing to express my strong support for HB1363, which will pave the way for the inclusion of AAPI curriculum within the Maryland K-12 public education system. I firmly believe that integrating AAPI history, culture, and contributions into the curriculum is essential for promoting diversity, fostering understanding, and empowering students of all backgrounds.

My own educational journey has been profoundly enriched by learning about the diverse experiences and contributions of AAPI individuals throughout history. From the struggles of early Asian immigrants to the United States to the achievements of contemporary AAPI leaders in various fields, studying AAPI history has provided me with valuable insights into the complexities of our society and the importance of embracing diversity.

It is vital that our students learn about the past of all of our American people. The teaching of US history is not complete without the inclusion of the Asian Americans that helped build this country into what it is today. Without the inclusion of Asian American studies in school curriculums, Maryland students grow up unknowing of the many contributions that Asian Americans have had on our country, including their involvement with the advancement of Civil Rights. Students also fail to learn about many important historical events, such as the internment of Japanese Americans, the massacre of Chinese immigrants in Los Angeles, and the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Four other states--Illinois, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Rhode Island--have already mandated Asian American Studies for K-12 schools. I believe it is our time to do so too.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB1363.

Sincerely,
Mary Truong