

Mary Tom two minute Virtual Testimony in support of HB1363:

Good afternoon. I am the President of the OCA-Greater Washington, DC Chapter (OCA-DC), Asian Pacific American Advocates.

I had recently retired on December 31 after 32 years of Federal Government service plus 20+ years in the private sector, and I want to promote the notion of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility not only in the federal workforce, but as an important principle in our school districts.

With K-12 students of color making up 66% of student demographics in Maryland, an inclusive curriculum would ensure that they see themselves accurately represented in the classroom. Passing legislation mandating representative curriculum in Maryland public schools will demonstrate our state's commitment to prioritize the protection of historically oppressed community members & youth from racism and violence.

Let our legacy reveal how important it is for my three grandchildren, now just ages 11, 9 and 7, to learn the milestone accomplishments of our AANHPI heritage that elevates their self-worth in proudly seeing their Asian American history recognized as an important part of our American history curriculum.

Please pass HB1363 that will require the State Board of Education to develop curriculum content standards for a unit of instruction on Asian American history in public schools in the State, plus require each county board of education to implement the Asian American history curriculum content standards into each public school in the county beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, and require that each county superintendent of schools ensures compliance with the Act.

Thank you for your time, and I pray for your serious consideration of my testimony expressed to you today!