

**Committees:** Ways and Means

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

**Position:** Favorable

26 February 2024

Madam Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Min Shain and I support House Bill 1363

As a Maryland resident of Burmese American heritage currently enrolled at Hood College, I bring a distinctive perspective to the inclusion of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) curriculum in Maryland's K-12 classrooms.

This proposed House Bill is a vital measure in advancing inclusivity, comprehension, and appreciation for the diverse experiences of Asian Americans throughout our society's history. As a Burmese Chinese immigrant, this legislation holds particular significance for me, serving to validate my heritage and identity. Furthermore, it offers a platform for fellow Asian Americans to explore and connect with their cultural roots. Education extends beyond mere academic achievement; it plays a crucial role in cultivating empathy, understanding, and respect for the stories and experiences of others. By integrating Asian American history into the curriculum, we empower future generations with the knowledge and empathy needed to construct a more inclusive and just society.

Growing up as a Burmese Chinese immigrant, my school years were marked by unique challenges. I often felt disheartened by the lack of acknowledgement for my cultural background. In contrast to the circumstances in Burma, I consider myself fortunate to have the opportunity for higher education in the U.S. Despite being a Burmese Chinese immigrant, I encountered stereotypes, such as the assumption of mathematical prowess due to my Asian heritage. Additionally, as an Asian student-athlete, I faced the misconception that I possessed knowledge of "Kung-Fu," a Chinese martial art.

Thank you,

Min Shain

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