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The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
Maryland General Assembly, Annapolis, MD 21401

Support Testimony for SJ0005 - Elementary and Secondary Education - Curriculum - Importance of Diversity

Hearing Date: March 07, 2025

Chairperson and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

My name is Maureen Wambui, and I am a proud Immigrant, Parent, Community advocate and resident of Legislative District 8 in Maryland. I appreciate the opportunity to testify to and express my strong support for **Senate Joint Resolution 5 (SJ0005)**, which affirms the importance of incorporating a culturally diverse curriculum in Maryland's elementary and secondary schools.

Education is the foundation of an informed and united society. However, for too long, many school curricula have overlooked the rich histories and contributions of marginalized communities. SJ0005 is an important step toward rectifying these gaps and ensuring that all Maryland students receive a comprehensive and accurate education.

Why SJ0005 is Essential

1. **Promotes Inclusivity and Representation** – Students from diverse backgrounds deserve to see their histories and contributions recognized in the curriculum. A more inclusive education fosters belonging and pride while teaching all students the value of diversity.
2. **Provides a More Accurate Historical Perspective** – History should not be selective or one-sided. This resolution ensures that students learn a fuller, more truthful account of historical events, including those that have shaped marginalized communities.
3. **Encourages Cultural Awareness and Empathy** – Exposure to different cultures and histories fosters understanding, reduces prejudice, and strengthens social cohesion among students of all backgrounds.

4. **Prepares Students for a Diverse Society** – In an increasingly interconnected world, cultural competence is a crucial skill. By learning about different histories and experiences, students will be better equipped to work and thrive in diverse environments.
5. **Addresses Historical Gaps in Education** – Many significant contributions from minority groups have been left out of traditional curricula. This resolution encourages a more balanced and comprehensive approach to education.

Recommendations for Effective Implementation

While SJ0005 is a strong foundation for educational reform, I urge the committee to consider the following recommendations to ensure its success:

1. **Guidelines for Curriculum Development** – The Maryland State Department of Education should work with historians, educators, and community leaders to provide clear guidelines for integrating diverse perspectives into curricula.
2. **Teacher Training and Resources** – Educators should receive training on how to effectively teach diverse histories, ensuring that content is accurate, engaging, and age-appropriate.
3. **Parental and Community Involvement** – Schools should create opportunities for parents and local communities to contribute insights and feedback on culturally inclusive education materials.
4. **Assessment and Accountability Measures** – Periodic reviews should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum changes and ensure that schools are meeting inclusivity goals.
5. **Balanced Representation** – The curriculum should cover a broad spectrum of historical perspectives, ensuring that no single narrative dominates while maintaining academic integrity.

By passing SJ0005, Maryland will take a significant step toward fostering a more inclusive and well-rounded educational system—one that acknowledges the full breadth of history and empowers students with knowledge, empathy, and cultural awareness.

I respectfully urge the committee to support SJ0005 and ensure that Maryland remains committed to providing an education that truly reflects the diverse fabric of our society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Maureen Wambui