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**Chairman Feldman, Vice chair Kagan and distinguished members of the
committee**

**SB 490: Various Statutes Regarding Resident Membership Requirements for
State Boards and Committees**

The AAPI Caucus supports SB 490, which expands opportunities for residents,
regardless of citizenship status, to participate in state boards and commissions. Many
non-citizen residents contribute significantly to our communities, particularly in areas
such as public health, education, and business. These individuals often bring valuable
expertise and perspectives that can help shape more effective policies and programs.
This bill acknowledges their expertise and lived experiences, allowing them to serve in
advisory and decision-making capacities that impact all Maryland residents. By

ensuring diverse representation on state boards, this legislation strengthens Maryland's democratic
processes and builds trust between government agencies and immigrant communities. Additionally, as
AAPI communities include many first-generation immigrants, SB 490 ensures that they, too, can have a
seat at the table in shaping policies that directly affect them. Representation matters, and this bill is a step
toward making Maryland's governance more inclusive and reflective of its diverse population.

Sincerely,

Harry Bhandari

Chair, Maryland Asian American Pacific Islander Caucus