

**Committees:** Ways and Means

**Testimony on:** HB1323 Education – Public Schools – Asian American History Teacher Professional Development and Resources

**Position:** Favorable

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

RE: Support for Maryland HB1323 – Education – Public Schools – Asian American History Curriculum Requirement

Dear members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

As a physician, I have seen firsthand how education impacts public health and well-being. A well-rounded education fosters understanding, empathy, and resilience—qualities that are essential for a thriving society. I urge you to support HB1323, which mandates the inclusion of Asian American history in Maryland's public school curriculum to provide students with a more accurate and inclusive understanding of American history.

Asian Americans have played critical roles in shaping our nation, from advancing civil rights to making significant contributions in science, medicine, and the arts. However, many students remain unaware of key historical events, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act, Japanese American internment, and the contributions of Asian American communities to the U.S. economy and culture. Research shows that a diverse curriculum improves academic outcomes, fosters social cohesion, and reduces bias-related incidents among students.

Four other states—Illinois, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Rhode Island—have already mandated Asian American studies in K-12 education. It is time for Maryland to follow suit. HB1323 ensures that students at all grade levels engage with Asian American history through structured and age-appropriate instruction, equipping them with the knowledge necessary to understand our nation's full history.

By investing in a more comprehensive curriculum, we prepare future generations to be more informed, compassionate, and culturally competent citizens. I strongly urge you to support HB1323 and advocate for its passage. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jay Chen