

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

Committees: Ways and Means

Position: Favorable

1 March 2025

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

My name is Aditya Kumar and I am writing on behalf of the Asian American Progressive Student Union, a student-led group of high schoolers dedicated to bridging the disparities that the Asian Americans face. I am writing to express my strong support for Maryland HB1323, which seeks to incorporate Asian American history training programs into the state's Continuing Professional Education Development program. This initiative is a crucial step toward equipping Maryland educators with high-quality, vetted resources that will enrich the curriculum and provide students with a more inclusive and accurate understanding of American history.

As a student at Clarksburg High School in Montgomery County, I have seen firsthand the gaps in our history curriculum. I have witnessed blatant racism and misconceptions due to the lack of Asian Americans representation in school classes; people are simply aware of the Asian American Pacific Islander Desi American people, whether that be through their accomplishments or all the hardships that we have endured.

The teaching of U.S. history is incomplete without acknowledging the contributions and experiences of Asian Americans. Without this inclusion, Maryland students may grow up unaware of the critical roles Asian Americans have played in shaping our nation—from their involvement in the Civil Rights Movement to landmark historical events such as the internment of Japanese Americans, the Chinese Exclusion Act, and the Los Angeles Chinese Massacre.

Research consistently shows that a diverse and inclusive curriculum leads to higher student engagement, improved academic performance, and a greater sense of belonging for students from all backgrounds. By investing in educator training, Maryland can ensure that future generations receive a more accurate and comprehensive education, fostering a deeper understanding of our nation's diverse history.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB1323. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Aditya Kumar

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