

Committees: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Testimony on: State Department of Education - Asian American History - Accurate Instruction

Position: Favorable

Chair Senator Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair Cheryl C. Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I write in strong support of the bill, State Department of Education - Asian American History - Accurate Instruction.

This bill is critical to ensuring that Asian American history is implemented consistently and meaningfully across Maryland schools. Too often, whether this history is taught well depends on chance—such as an individual teacher’s background knowledge or whether a school happens to have appropriate resources—rather than a reliable, statewide commitment to equitable education.

This legislation aligns with the goals of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future by promoting equitable educational opportunities regardless of zip code. This bill ensures consistency, sustainability, and accountability across districts.

The need for this bill remains urgent. Schools play a critical role in shaping understanding, countering stereotypes, and fostering respect among students. Accurate, well-supported instruction in Asian American history benefits not only Asian American students, but all students, by strengthening civic understanding and cultural literacy.

As a student who goes to School in Maryland, and is of Asian American Descent I have often felt overlooked when it comes to curricula. The one day where I felt as though I was represented, was in class when my Biology teacher deliberately credited a theory we were learning to a brown community. This small action made a large impact, I remember going up to her after the class and thanking her. Not only did it make me more engaged in the class, it made me feel heard and seen. That is a feeling that EVERY student needs to feel, and it’s something that I urge the members of this committee to understand.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on this bill. Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to Maryland’s students.

Sincerely,  
Sidharth Harishanker  
OCA-DC  
Boyds, MD