



FOUNDATION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN VISIBILITY

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June 14, 2023

The Honorable Josh Newman
Chair, Senate Education Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1354 (Mike Fong and Ting) — Support

Dear Senator Newman,

The Foundation for Asian American Visibility—a national, Los Angeles-based, non-partisan, and student-led non-profit organization—strongly supports AB 1354, which would require the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), during the next revision of the history-social science frameworks, to consider including: 1) the historical, social, economic, and political contributions made by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (APIs) in the United States; and 2) examples of racism, discrimination and violence perpetuated against AAPI communities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

California has the largest population of Asian Americans of any state in country. While the Asian American community has made rich contributions to the economic, political, social and cultural fabric of our state and nation, Asian Americans have suffered both ongoing discrimination and a recent onslaught of hate.

Hate incidents and hate crimes against Asian Americans have spiked dramatically, most recently due to xenophobia and racism in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Stop AAPI Hate, an organization formed to track the cases of harassment against Asian Americans, received reports of over 11,400 cases of hate incidents from Asian Americans, from verbal assaults to physical assaults, including deaths, over a two-year period between March 2020 and March 2022. One in five Asian Americans reported being a target of harassment, demonstrating Sacramento's responsibility to act to protect California's Asian American community.

Education of our youth is key to preventing recurrence of sentiments that Asian Americans are “foreigners” and “do not belong in the United States.” As a high school student myself, I recognize the importance of using Asian American history education as a means to counteract the bigotry that Asian American communities are facing. Accurate and complete representation of Asian Americans in educational materials and media will contribute to a more inclusive environment for students, affirm Asian Americans' place in society and combat harmful stereotypes. AB 1354 takes a critical step in advancing the mission of the Foundation for Asian American Visibility, which is to fight for a country where all Asian Americans are seen, heard and respected, can thrive with dignity and fully experience the blessings of American liberty.

For the visibility, prosperity and golden future of California and our vibrant Asian American community, the Foundation for Asian American Visibility is proud to stand in strong support of AB 1354.

Sincerely,

Brandon H. Cheng
Founder and Executive Director, Foundation for Asian American Visibility