



Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

Advocating for Equity and Diversity throughout Oregon

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate committee on Education,

For the record, Padma Akkaraju and Aparna Rajagopal serve as Commissioners on the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA). We are writing to express our support for SB1583 on behalf of OCAPIA.

OCAPIA is guided by principles and values that emphasize equal treatment, protection against discrimination, and access to essential information on services and resources.

Oregon has a history of discrimination against populations, including Black, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, individuals with disabilities, and LGBTQIA2S+ communities. Surveys of K-12 curriculum from across the country also show cultural bias in selection of school materials—and particularly materials related to American history and government (which is the subject of this bill) —which results in the erasure or suppression of marginalized voices and the distortion of their history and contributions to the United States. By way of example and relevant to OCAPIA's constituency, studies show Asian Americans and their perspectives are rarely given attention in U.S. history (Sohyun An (2016) Asian Americans in American History: An AsianCrit Perspective on Asian American Inclusion in State U.S. History Curriculum Standards, Theory & Research in Social Education, 44:2, 244-276, DOI: [10.1080/00933104.2016.1170646](https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2016.1170646)).

It is imperative that individuals and populations protected against discrimination are represented accurately and respectfully in materials related to American history and government across various platforms, such as libraries, K-12 and Higher Education curricula, textbooks, public libraries, and programs. It is also important to ensure students are presented with materials that amplify the voices and perspectives of individuals and communities protected against discrimination. SB 1583 is vital in preventing the resurgence of covert or overt discrimination in our state by supporting universal access to these platforms for all individuals and communities.

Additionally, SB 1583 validates humanity, upholds civil rights, and ensures equal access to resources that broaden the horizon for all Oregonians. It facilitates the recognition and honoring of the humanity and civil rights of individuals and groups facing discrimination.

Supporting SB 1583 aligns completely with OCAPIA's principles and values. Therefore, the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs strongly advocates for its passage through the Joint Ways & Means Committee.

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