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**TESTIMONY OF  
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 20, 2008**

I appreciate the opportunity to support House Bill 5321, An Act Establishing an Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission.

This proposal establishes a commission to serve as a liaison between state government and the Asian Pacific American community in Connecticut, facilitating communication and encouraging economic development with Asian Pacific nations. The commission would ensure that state programs such as health care, housing and job training are available to members of the Asian Pacific American community who need such services.

Connecticut's diversity is its strength. We may not always recognize the needs of diverse groups that contribute to our state's growth and development.

The Asian Pacific American community is one of the fastest growing segments of Connecticut's population, increasing by more than 30% in the past 5 years. The community consists of hard working families who sometimes may need state services.

A commission -- modeled after existing commissions for women, Latinos and African Americans -- allows for an official voice for the community, empowering its members and providing a forum for discussion on issues of concern.

Connecticut should recognize the key role of Asian Pacific Americans in our state by establishing this commission.

I strongly urge the committee's favorable consideration of House Bill 5321.