



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM TONG
147th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4003
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
HOME: (203) 524-5528
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8747
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-8267
FAX: (860) 240-0206
E-MAIL: William.Tong@cga.ct.gov

VICE CHAIRMAN
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GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Thank you Chairwoman Harp, Chairman Geragosian, the Ranking Members, and members of the Appropriations Committee, for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission.

Last year, the General Assembly, and our Governor, passed a historic law to create the Asian Pacific American Commission. The Asian Pacific American Community is grateful for your support. Now we need your help once again. The Governor has called for the elimination of the Asian Pacific American Commission and its sister Commissions, and we urge you to oppose this rash and counterproductive plan.

It is at moments like this—when our friends and neighbors face great challenges, and vital programs and services may be eliminated—that the Commission will do its most important work. This is when the Commission will speak for the Asian Pacific American janitor who may lose her healthcare, the immigrant who needs English as a Second Language (ESL) training to get a job, and the casino worker who rents a bed for a few hours each night and needs safe and affordable housing. This is when we need you to fight with us for our fledgling Commission, and for all the people of Connecticut who share in our diverse and uniquely Connecticut experience.

The Commission is in the process of being impaneled. No more than \$25,000 has been allocated to the Commission thus far. Like all of you, I am ready with work with our leadership, and the Governor, to make the tough decisions that need to be made in this economic environment. But there is no need to eliminate the Commission altogether, and to dampen the voice of the more than 150,000 Asian Pacific Americans in Connecticut who have fought so long, and so hard, to be heard.

Thank you again for your support.