

Testimony of Angela Rola
Before the Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly

February 11, 2009

Good Evening Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian, and members of the Appropriations Committee. I am Angela Rola, Chair of the CT Asian Pacific American Coalition, the director of the University of Connecticut's Asian American Cultural Center at the Storrs campus and a resident of the town of Willington.

I appreciate the opportunity to be before this committee again. Just last session the General Assembly voted favorably to pass the bill that created the Asian Pacific American Commission, an effort that our community has been working on for many years. Fully understanding the economic downturn on our nation and in our state, it was nonetheless disheartening to hear last Wednesday of the Governor's proposal to eliminate the five existing commissions as well as eliminating the start of the Asian Pacific American Commission. The proposal is for "existing agencies to absorb the commissions' duties". In the case our community, we will once again be underserved as many of our issues are systematically ignored. Issues of education, jobs, physical and mental health care, legal access, immigration, and economic development in the APA community will continue to go unchecked.

Tonight you will hear from many of our community members. I urge you to note the myriad of issues they raise and see that even the modest amount of funding allocated to the APA Commission is a start to serving this diverse and rapidly growing population of residents who live in every county, work in virtually every industry, and contribute to the well-being of this great state of Connecticut.

Thank you very much for your time.