

My name is Frank Yu, I am a third year law student at the University of Connecticut, President of the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, citizen and taxpayer of this state, and I implore you to make the right decision by funding the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission. I'm from a small Massachusetts town named Sharon, where I was one of two APAs in my class, I did my undergraduate at UC Berkeley, where I was one of thousands of APAs, and I have lived in Connecticut now for 3 years, where I now part of a true community of APAs. Throughout I've lived in Asian communities that vary in size, demographics, and socioeconomics, so I like to think that I have some perspective but...

I want to tell you specifically why I am here in CT. When I was choosing law schools, I wanted to be close to an Asian community, but Connecticut was not known to have many Asians. It scared me. However, my father, who at the time was dying of cancer but sprouting full of wisdom, sat me down and reminded me that while there may not be a majority of Asians in CT, there would certainly be a minority in need of help. Just as they did when they moved to Sharon, MA, my parents wanted me to go to a situation I was unfamiliar with - where people might think we have strange faces - and to help our community with whatever skill and ability (legal or not) I could. You see they understood that a community needs help most when its small and growing, *not* when its big and slowing.

I hope that the budget committee realizes the same, that the Asian community is in a critical stage in its development in the state and its needs your support. I hope the committee considers that funding this commission is more than just nickels and dimes, more than an Asian issue, more than even a CT issue...funding the coalition demonstrates why America is a great country. The idea of the government having the proper institutions in place so that the people can rely on it to listen to their problems *and* solutions reminds us that people matter in this country. Given these economic times, our politicians face tough decisions, and their actions are looked upon to lead us through the darkness. We need to know that you're listening and we need to know that Asian Americans matter to you.