

## The Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (APAAC) Needs to Remain a Separate Commission

By Arvind Shaw Feb 19<sup>th</sup> 2013

My name is Arvind Shaw. I live in Eastford, CT. I am the CEO of Generations family Health Center, Inc. I am a member of the Asian Pacific American community in Connecticut and a current member of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission.

**The APA population in Connecticut.** According to the 2010 U.S. Census Asian Pacific Americans have an estimated population of over 157,000 and in *Connecticut it grew 65%* between 2000 and 2010 and continues to be the fastest growing minority group in the state. There are a total of 164 non-English home languages throughout Connecticut school systems and many of those are Asian languages

However, *State agencies have been slow to understand the needs of this Community.*

Did you know that?

- Three-decades after the fall of the Khmer Rouge Cambodian Americans are Dying of Genocide?
- Cambodian survivors are getting sicker at a younger age than other Americans?
- In the US, Cambodian Survivors have the same healthcare costs as the States of Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont Combined? (Estimated at \$2.8 -\$3.7 Billion a year)
- Do you think that intensive targeted Health care coordination saves lives and Dollars here?

The State of Ct. collects Data on Whites, Hispanics, Blacks, Native Americans and Others? *Asians are counted in this "other" default category* and today we cannot drill down into its database to see who, where, how, and what this population needs?

Why has there has never been a comprehensive health needs assessment done for Asians?

Why has there never been a public health initiative to see how these residents are receiving care?

Why is there no recent comprehensive language survey published for the State?

There are many tradeoffs that we will get from the continued investment in our APA State Commission

-Better health data will improve our awareness about system delivery for the improved outcomes that foster prevention and save money

-This APA community suffers greatly from an epidemic of hate crimes and bullying. Parents and children need to amplify their voice so that they live without the daily fear in their communities.

-*The APA is the only Commission that can also facilitate trade with the Pacific Rim and the Asian countries* by being prepared to extend the network of with culturally attuned and linguistically proficient citizens to welcome commerce partners and jobs to the State.

Consolidating the state commissions will inhibit our ability to fully represent the diverse members of our Asian Pacific American community and will result in the unique needs of our community being diluted and pushed farther into the background.

There are many more questions about where we are to find health equity for the APA in Connecticut. There is no substitute for Organization, and this Commission provides us just that.

This is why I strongly urge you that our rapidly growing community is fully represented by a separate commission for Asian Pacific Americans, to ensure our voice continues to be heard and our needs for integration and assimilation be planned and managed.

Thank You,