March 6, 2018

Subject: Support CT SB00359, An Act Prohibiting The Disaggregation Of Student Data By Ethnic Subgroups In The Public School Information System.

Honorable Members of the Education Committee:

I am the president of the Chinese American Heritage Association, Inc. (CAHAI), a 501 C (3) non-profit organization headquartered at Fairfield Connecticut. On behalf of the organization, I am writing to testify for the support of the bill No.SB00359 “Prohibiting the Disaggregation of Student Data by Ethnic or Racial Subgroups in the Public School Information System”.

After learned that last summer Rhode Island passed an “All Student Count” act that singles out its only 3% of Asian American student population for the registry of their family immigration nation of origin and Ethnicity origin, and a very few other states have also passed the similar bill without much input from Asian American communities, the CAHAI board held a special meeting on December 2nd, 2017, discussing the matter gravely concerning Chinese Americans, especially CAHAI members across the states. The board members unanimously passed a resolution to strongly oppose any bill proposing data disaggregation, or data collection based on the ancestor’s nation of origin or ethnicity. The Board’s resolution was communicated to all the members and we believe this kind of bill is non-American as a melting pot to unite every American citizen no matter where you were originated from. The US is the only country for the second and forthcoming generations of American citizens who should not be tied to their ancestor’s nation or ethnicity origin. Even we are proud to carry Chinese Heritage, but at Government Policy level, it is clear in practice that all children should be treated fairly and equally as Americans.

We strongly support the original concept of “prohibiting educational institutions or other state agencies from collection and separation of data from students by subpopulations of national origins or ethnicity”. However, the current language, “unless collected uniformly across the entire population of students” can potentially be problematic down the road. We believe the entire student population should not be subjected to the registry of ancestry or immigration from their nation of origin. Student’s nation or ethnicity origin should never be a factor in the classrooms. Any ethnicity-based education is bad education. Any ethnicity-based policy leads to racial profiling, division and separation. It is wrong to do it to Asian American children, and it is wrong to do it to ANY/ALL American children. Millions of immigrants came to America to be part of a united country, not a divided one.

Therefore, on behalf of the Chinese American Heritage Association, I strongly urge you modify the bill language to state that “No population of students shall be subjected to data collection of ancestry nation of origin and ethnicity origin”.

Please vote for Bill SB00359!

Sincerely,

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