Honorable Members of Education Committee:

My name is Feng Zhang, a resident of the town of Westport Connecticut. I have a Ph.D. in Genetics and MBA in Analytic Finance. I am writing to you to support the bill SB0359 titled “Prohibiting the Disaggregation of Student Data by Ethnic or Racial Subgroups in the Public School Information System”.

Some other states have passed or are in the process of proposing bills that specifically target Asian American students. Those bills require mandatory registry of Asian American student’s ancestral nation of origin or ethnic background.

I support the original concept of SB0359 “prohibiting educational institutions or other state agencies from the mandatory collection and separation of data from students by subpopulations of national origins or ethnicity”. I firmly believe any mandatory registry of any ethnic background by schools or any state agencies are fundamentally UNAMERICAN! It raises huge constitutional concerns. America is a nation of immigrants, and we Asian Americans came to the United States of America to pursue happiness, individual liberty and American dream. Dr. Martin Luther King’s dream half a century ago is also a part of our American dream: I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. Thus I am very concerned about the current language: “unless collected uniformly across the entire population of students”

Those discriminatory bills passed or proposed in other states are usually under such names as “All Students Counts” or “Data Disaggregation”, with the purposes to identify underprivileged students or provide better healthcare policies for some Asian sub groups.

Many academic and empirical researches have firmly demonstrated that SOCIAL CLASS - parents’ income levels, level of education, and job status - is the single factor with the most influence on how ready to learn a child is when she first walks through the school’s kindergarten door. Low social class puts children far behind from the start. Race and ethnicity compound that disadvantage, largely due to factors also related to social class. An Asian student studying in Bridgeport school system probably is more underprivileged than any student of any ethnic background studying in Westport school system. It’s typical of racial profiling by implying some Asian sub groups have natural disadvantage of learning and study.

The breakthroughs from the Human Genome Project from 1990s and early 2000s result in such scientific conclusion: genetically speaking, race is a social and political concept. Francis Collin, a director of National Institutes of Health (NIH) then and a leader of this project, declared that this is only one race on earth: human race.

In summary, any ethnic registry for education and healthcare purposes is completely groundless.

Please vote Yeah for bill SB0359 with the remove of “unless collected uniformly across the entire population of students”

Thank you for your time.

Feng Zhang