Honorable Members of Education Committee:

My name is Xiang Zhang, resident of Groton, Connecticut. I am writing to testify in regard of Bill No. SB359 “Prohibiting the Disaggregation of Student Data by Ethnic or Racial Subgroups in the Public School Information System”.

I support the original concept of “prohibiting educational institutions or other state agencies from mandatory collection and separation of data from students by subpopulations of national origin or ethnicity”. However we are very concerned in regard of this portion of the current bill language “unless… collected uniformly across the entire population of students”. I believe the entire population shall NOT be subject to registry of ancestry immigration nation of origin or ethnicity origin.

I came to United States in 2011 believing this is the land of equal opportunities. 7 years after, I have settled on this land. I completed my education in 2015, started working for Pfizer Inc. right after getting my PhD, and married to the one I love just this January. I have never doubt that United States is the land and nation, as Dr. King said, for the people to live where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

Many Asian colleagues I know here in Connecticut have built up families and settled on this land, their children were born in US and are American. Some of these colleagues were nationalized and are Americans too. America is a country of immigrants. Generations of immigrants have contributed, enriched and reshaped a constantly evolving identity of being Americans. But it is one identity nevertheless. This is why I strongly support legislation that ban labelling kids as perpetual foreigners in name of data collection. We don’t want to see one day some policies and practices are formed based upon his nation of origin or ethnicity which most of the time meant well, but can lead to discrimination and cause harm. We don’t want the Asian kids born in America to be seen as “another kind of American”. This great nation was built upon the notion that “All men are created equal”.

Race and ethnicity should never be criteria to categorize people.

Please modify the bill language as to “No population of students shall be subject to data collection of ancestry nation of origin and ethnicity origin”. Please vote for bill SB359. Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration!

Yours truly,

Xiang Zhang