Honorable Members of the Connecticut Education Committee:

My name is Xiaoyan (Lorinda) Zhang. I am senior management professional with an MBA degree from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. In the last 15 years, I have been working in the Health Insurance industry in Connecticut. I currently reside in Avon with my husband and our three girls. We started my family here and proudly call Connecticut our home state. Today, I am writing to testify in regard of the 2018 CT SB00359 “An Act Prohibiting The Disaggregation Of Student Data By Ethnic 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, I am very concerned in regard of this portion of the current bill language “Such data relating to students shall not be disaggregated by ethnic subgroups unless such disaggregated student data is (I) required under federal law, or (II) collected uniformly for all ethnic subgroups among the entire student population in the state”. I believe that the entire population shall not be subject to registry of ancestry immigration nation of origin or ethnicity origin.

Profiling based on national origin or ethnicity is against the basic spirits that this country was founded upon. Per Amendment 14 of the U.S. Constitution, “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws”. Profiling based on nation of origin or ethnicity origin is not treating every American equally.

As a first generation immigrant, I came to this land of the free and the brave to seek freedom and equality. In my American dream, our kids should be provided the same opportunities at school and should be judged by the content of their character and not where their grandparents were born. I am every proud of my Asian origin and I only speak Chinese to my kids at home. However, my children are 100% American and their deserve equal rights as ALL other American kids. The US is facing enough problems right now. I am confident that we could get through the troubles if we are UNITED. Let’s stop all laws that does not contribute to our UNITED cause.

I am very sad to learn that several so called “Asian Registry” bills have been passed or are being reviewed in a number of other states, from the East coast to the West. I am uncertain of the true drivers behind these bills. However, I am pretty sure about the damaging effect they have - they are burying seeds to divide the future generations of this great country.
Many experts have confirmed that SOCIAL CLASS - parents’ income levels, level of education, and job status - is the single most influential factor that impacts how ready to learn a child is when he/she enters that school system, not nation of origin or ethnicity. If we want to identify students that need extra help, nation of origin and ethnicity origin should not be the criteria.

Please modify the bill language to say “No population of students shall be subject to data collection of ancestry nation of origin and ethnicity origin”. Please vote for bill SB359.

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