

**Education Committee**  
**JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT**

**Bill No.:** HB-5282

AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC  
**Title:** ISLANDER STUDIES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

**Vote Date:** 3/11/2022

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference to Appropriations

**PH Date:** 3/4/2022

**File No.:**

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**SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Sen. Saud Anwar, 3rd Dist.  
Rep. Michael A. Winkler, 56th Dist.  
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Rep. John K. Hampton, 16th Dist.  
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Sen. Tony Hwang, 28th Dist.  
Rep. Susan M. Johnson, 49th Dist.  
Rep. Bobby G. Gibson, 15th Dist.  
Sen. Julie Kushner, 24th Dist.  
Sen. Derek Slap, 5th Dist.  
Rep. Tom Delnicki, 14th Dist.  
Rep. Terrie E. Wood, 141st Dist.  
Rep. Anne M. Hughes, 135th Dist.  
Rep. Eleni Kavros DeGraw, 17th Dist.  
Rep. Gary A. Turco, 27th Dist.  
Rep. Irene M. Haines, 34th Dist.  
Rep. Corey P. Paris, 145th Dist.  
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Rep. Joshua M. Hall, 7th Dist.  
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Rep. David Michel, 146th Dist.  
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Rep. Michael D Quinn, 82nd Dist.

Rep. Josh Elliott, 88th Dist.  
Sen. Marilyn V. Moore, 22nd Dist.  
Rep. Frank Smith, 118th Dist.  
Rep. Jill Barry, 31st Dist.

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

Requires public schools to include Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) studies in their curriculum. The bill also allows local or regional boards of education in the development of the Asian American and Pacific Islander curriculum to accept gifts, grants and donations for that purpose.

The substitute language of the bill removed sections related to the collection of disaggregated student data for specific ethnic subgroups, unless required by federal law or collected uniformly across the entire population of students.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

[Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker, CT State Dept. of Education](#): "Asian American and Pacific Islander studies was required to be included in the K-8 model curriculum the Department was tasked with creating under section 374 of PA 12-2 from the June Special Session. Therefore, we believe this requirement is redundant."

[State of CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities](#): "The State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) supports HB-5282. CHRO is particularly interested in this issue because, as the state agency that receives and investigates charges of discrimination (including school bullying because of one's protected status), working to eliminate discrimination in schools should eliminate discrimination in other places."

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[Megan Baker, Thomas Nuccio & Werner Oyanadel, Policy Analysts, Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity](#): "The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, & Opportunity supports the notion of utilizing education as an asset-based opportunity to deconstruct cultural barriers and combat cultural biases."

[Rep. Farrar](#): "This bill is not only the right thing to do for our state and our students but is also very personal. As the wife of an Asian-American, I have not only witnessed discrimination faced by our AsianAmerican friends, family and neighbors but had to worry about my husband's safety and that of my family members. Unfortunately, this discrimination and violence towards the AAPI community is learned. Education and understanding can be built from the youngest ages and the teaching of AAPI history has the ability to do just that."

[Subira Gordon, Executive Director, ConnCAN](#): "ConnCAN fully supports sections 1 & 2 of this bill. It is essential to expand the curriculum to include the voices, experiences and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. In the last three years, there's been an alarming increase to Asian hate crimes, largely due to cultural ignorance, misinformation and bias. This

legislation begins the process of learning about non-white cultures in our schools, and understanding the various nuances of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community."

[Ray Rossomando, Policy, Research, & Government Relations Director, Connecticut Education Association:](#) "To that end, CEA believes that the continued development of a state model curriculum by educators, with input from parents and boards of education, would help ensure that the history and cultures of all of Connecticut's citizens, including Asian American and Pacific Islanders noted in this bill, are represented appropriately. Such model curriculum, as provided for in CGS 10-25b would be a costeffective way to promote more inclusive and responsive curricula in every district in the state."

[Ben Zhao, College Student:](#) "We have a duty to protect the next generation of Asian Americans who will be able to experience the same feelings of inclusivity, welcoming, and feeling proud of their cultural backgrounds and differences that I was able to which starts with acts like HB5282."

[Dr. Gunjan Sharma, Assistant Professor, Smith College:](#) "I strongly urge you to consider the teaching of AAPI history as a stand-alone bill and integrated into all curricula, not just as an elective option for students. Asian American Pacific Islander history is a critical part of American history alongside the histories of other traditionally marginalized groups. There are misconceptions and harmful stereotypes around AAPI that lead to biases, discrimination, and sadly as we have seen increase recently, anti-Asian sentiment and violence. One key way to combat this is through education, which benefits all students and members of our society and creates a richer, more vibrant community."

[Michael Zhu, College Student:](#) "I believe we have an obligation to create a country that is inviting to all cultural backgrounds and part of that process is to teach American history in its full capacity from the multiple diverse perspectives that have shaped it. Please vote in favor of the AAPI history section of this bill out of committee."

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

[Hannah Chen, New Canaan, CT Resident:](#) "I believe each and every ethnic group is a part of this country, history of each and every ethnic group is part of history of this country, each ethnic group is equally important to the history of this country. We all witness the diversity and inclusion of ethnic groups in our school education. To be fair and just, each and every ethnic group and sub-groups should be equally included. Please leave the education to parents and experts of education."

All other testimony on HB-5282 can be found on the [CGA website](#).

**Reported by: Matthew Boucher**

**Date: 3/18/22**