



Representative Stephanie Howse
Representative Tavia Galonski
Ohio's 11th and 35th House District

Sponsor Testimony for House Bill 630
House State and Local Government Committee

December 14, 2020

Good Afternoon Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee. I want to thank you for allowing me to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 603 (HB 603), legislation to create the Ohio Asian-American and Pacific Islander Affairs Commission, and the Office of Asian American and Pacific Islander Affairs.

According to the 2018 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau, Ohio's Asian population has more than doubled since 2000 and is six times the 1980 count and is continuing to grow. Ohio's Asian American community in Ohio is currently comprised of:

- More than 345,000 people, accounting for 3.0 percent of the state's total population.
- More than 21,000 Asian American-owned businesses in Ohio.
- There are more than 39,000 Asian American students enrolled in Ohio's elementary and secondary schools, making up 2.1 percent of Ohio's total student body.
- Nearly 38,000 Asian American Ohioans are enrolled in college or graduate school.

The formation of this commission will be an important step in ensuring that state government is accessible and equitable to the **fastest-growing racial/ethnic group in the U.S. and Ohio**. The new commission will do the following:

- Gather and disseminate information and conduct hearings, conferences, investigations, and special studies on problems and programs concerning Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders;
- Secure appropriate recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to Ohio;
- Stimulate public awareness of the problems of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders by conducting a program of public education;
- Develop, coordinate, and assist other public and private organizations that serve Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, including the conduction of training programs for community leadership and service project staff;
- Advise the governor, general assembly, and state departments and agencies on the priorities of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders populations;



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- Review grants, which are made by federal, state, or private sources, and which are to be administered by the Office of Asian-American and Pacific Islander Affairs,
- promote the delivery of state services across diverse communities;
- And provide resources for culturally appropriate organizations and language services.

Thank you, Chairman Wiggam, and members of the State and Local Government Committee for your attention to this matter. At this time, we would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



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1 <https://development.ohio.gov/files/research/P7004.pdf>