

Proponent Testimony for House Bill 171
House Primary and Secondary Education Committee
December 10, 2023

Timothy Meno
Founding Board Member, Chamorro Association of the Midwest

Dear Chair Bird, Representative Mary Lightbody and House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Timothy “Tim” Meno. As a proud veteran, a graduate of an Ohio-based university, and a constituent, I would like to express my strong support for House Bill 171. This important legislation seeks to update the K-12 social studies model curriculum to better reflect the diverse backgrounds and histories of all Ohioans.

My personal journey as a Chamorro, a veteran, and an Ohioan underscores the importance of this bill. After serving my country, I pursued higher education in Ohio, where I also raised my child. Throughout my child's education, I found a significant gap in the curriculum regarding the representation of Chamorro culture and other minority groups. This concern is further highlighted by the recent census data showing a significant increase in the Pacific Islander and Chamorro populations in the Midwest from 2010-2020.

My child, who is now an adult and a fellow Ohio voter, was deprived of the opportunity to learn about their own culture and the cultures of their peers in school. We had to rely on private community events to fill this gap. House Bill 171 presents an opportunity to change this for future generations. It is essential for our educational system to mirror the diverse society in which we live, fostering a sense of belonging and understanding among all students.

The implementation of this bill will not only benefit Chamorro students but will enrich the educational experience of every student in Ohio. An inclusive curriculum prepares our children to be empathetic, informed, and engaged citizens in our increasingly diverse society.

As a proud Ohioan, a veteran, and a university alumnus, I strongly urge you to support House Bill 171. This bill represents a significant step toward a more inclusive and representative educational system in Ohio. I ask that you consider the impact of this legislation and vote for its immediate passage.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available for any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Tim Meno