

Testimony for HB 171
Submitted by: Jenika Gonzales
Organization: OPAWL (Ohio Progressive Asian Women Leadership)
Testifying as Proponent

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

My name is Jenika May Gonzales. I live in Cleveland, Ohio, and am a Community Member with OPAWL (Ohio Progressive Asian Women Leadership). I am a concerned citizen, and I am asking this committee to support HB 171, which updates the Social Studies model curriculum to better reflect the histories of all Ohioans by including the migration histories, societal contributions, and experiences of a range of communities in Ohio and the United States who are not currently represented in our classrooms.

I believe that passing this bill is good for Ohio and Ohio students because, as an immigrant who moved to this country at the age of 14, I often felt left out in the classrooms; my culture and my identity were not part of any textbooks and it made the other kids in my school treat me in a way that did not make me feel accepted. With this curriculum, I hope future kids have the resources and opportunity to expand their knowledge of cultural identities and help celebrate children with different values and cultures. It is important for children to grow up in an environment where they do not feel othered and unseen based on their culture.

I respectfully urge the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee to consider my testimony and vote yes to support H.B. 171. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify supporting this legislation.

Respectfully,
Jenika Gonzales