

Testimony for HB 171
Submitted by: Maki Somosot
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist Leadership in Ohio
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 Maki Somosot, I live in Cincinnati, and I am a Filipina immigrant to Ohio and a member of OPAWL. 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 we need to promote the full diversity of our state. Ohio is made up of different races, cultures, ethnicities, religions, and gender identities and expressions. In order for our state to move forward, we need to acknowledge each other's social, economic, and political contributions. We need to showcase the rich diversity of our communities so we don't succumb to tired old stereotypes of Ohio as being predominantly a "white" state.

As a Filipina immigrant and woman, I also have a personal stake in lifting up AAPI history in Ohio. With AAPIs being one of the fastest-growing populations in Columbus, we need to expand our public education curricula to include the rich history of our AAPI immigrant and refugee communities. As Ohio becomes more and more diverse, we need our public education system to catch up and acknowledge those who have chosen to make this great state their home.

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