

**Testimony for HB 171**  
**Submitted by: Jonathan Stone**  
**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 Jon Stone. I am from Lebanon Ohio and now live in Columbus. I am a parent of two young children. 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.

Including AAPI history in K-12 curriculum is a critical part of ensuring the safety of our AAPI community through increasing the education of both AAPI and non-AAPI communities. By making the AAPI community visible in our country's history it promotes an awareness that AAPI individuals are an interwoven part of our collective story as Americans and the continued success of our country.

My best friend since seventh grade has been a dear friend who happens to be mixed-race Korean American. We bonded over comic books and late nights of video games fueled by doritos and mountain dew. We never spoke of race until many years later. That's why it pained me when he told me that in those early days of our friendship he had been experiencing things like a customer at the grocery store he worked telling him he could not touch their groceries because he was Asian. Or when kids attacked him from behind without provocation, hitting him with a skateboard and yelling anti-Asian slurs at him. The ignorance that fuels the idea of the perpetual foreigner lends itself to making the AAPI community a target for acts of bullying and violence. How do we support the AAPI community? How do we fight that ignorance? Many in this community have been Americans for generations and have contributed so greatly to this society. So what can we do to expel this notion that the AAPI community are not Americans or do not belong in their own home?

I am lucky now myself to be the proud father of two mixed-race Korean American children, a chatty 8-year old bookworm and a rambunctious 5 year-old that has no time for my parental nonsense or his vegetables. When my older son was less than a year old my wife was carrying him on her chest as we walked down the street. We parted ways as I ducked into a shop for an appointment. A few doors down the block a young white man exited from a shop, looked at them and spat the words "Go back to your country." That was my son's first racist incident; it was not my wife's first. We have already had to speak to teachers about a number of incidents involving his race, most involving other kids pulling their eyes back at him. How does our larger community of Ohio support my family, my wife and my sons? How does our larger community fight the ignorance that has resulted in the pain to my family caused by these incidents and the incidents that are sure to come in the future? How do we

take a proactive approach to fighting head-on the increase of manifested anti-Asian sentiments that we hear about and the AAPI community experiences?

Education is a tool for fighting ignorance. Please let this bill be a step along the path to protecting the well-being of the AAPI community. Recognizing the contributions of the AAPI community in our country will benefit all children and all communities. If all Ohians have a deep understanding that AAPI faces are American faces, this will help to protect my family and so many others as well.

I respectfully and strongly 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.