



Instagram: rhhs_project_lotus

Hello, my name is Maggie Sun. I am a freshman attending Riverhill High School. I am a member of Project Lotus, a club promoting Asian American culture.

It wasn't until my early teenage years had I first really learned about the culture of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Learning about my culture and where my people came from was a fascinating experience, and it taught me to appreciate myself, my culture, and also to appreciate other cultures and ways of life. Thus, I stand in strong support of The CB72-2022 act which will provide many benefits toward the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, such as allowing more people such as myself to learn about their culture.

By establishing a Commission for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, we are able to increase education and spread awareness about AAPI culture. Spreading awareness about culture is important because it allows students and families of different ethnicities to be heard and have their backgrounds appreciated. This can allow people to feel more at home here in Howard County, and live in a place where their ideas and culture are represented.

Another important reason as to why a Commission for AAPI would be beneficial is to reduce hate crime and hate speech. In Maryland from 2019-2020 only, the percentage of hate crime based upon race and ethnicity increased by 30.7%. By setting up a commission, Howard County is able to promote culture and educate people about the community. When education and awareness are spread about a certain group of people, their culture becomes more known to others, and people are less fearful. Most racially motivated hate crimes are based upon fear or the unknown, and by spreading awareness, we are able to prevent or lessen the amount of hate crimes directed against people of AAPI origin.

A commission is able to successfully show representation in the AAPI community. Statistics from 2021 says that more than 20% of the population in Howard County is either of Asian or Pacific Islander origin. That is 20% of the population that is being represented by an AAPI Commission. This commission will, again, allow the voices of the AAPI people to be heard.

Ultimately, an Asian American Pacific Islander Commission will prove to be a great asset in spreading awareness about culture, representing the AAPI people, and reducing hate crime and hate speech. Thank you for your time, and I hope you strongly consider establishing the CB72-2022 act.



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Good evening, my name is Lily Peng. I am a Junior at River Hill High School and one of the co founders of Project Lotus at RHHS, a club that strives to promote Asian American heritage and combat discrimination. Thank you so much for this opportunity to testify and for proposing this wonderful bill which I stand in strong support of.

Over the weekend, I watched the Japanese animation film, *The Boy and the Beast*. The movie covers the story of nine year old Ren, who has recently lost his mother and father. With no community to turn to and a growing hole in his heart, Ren flees to the streets.

By chance, a beast finds Ren sleeping on the street and takes him under his wing. Thanks to the beasts who raised him, Ren is able to grow up into someone warm and full-hearted, with his once empty heart filled by his newfound community.

In stark contrast, another little boy, who we will call Ian, is also a human raised by a beast. However, Ian turns out a little differently from Ren. Without a community to support him, a visible hole in his heart grows until one day, he lashes out. Why did this happen? Why did Ian act so differently from Ren?

Ian never knew why he looked different from his father and the people around him confused why his brother had tusks and a long boar nose, and he didnt. He never felt like he fit in. Ian had a large hole in his heart, one carved out by a lack of community.

Truly, the story of the Boy and the Beast demonstrates the importance of community is undeniable.

Sadly, the AAPI community has been targeted. An 84 year old Thai man was pushed to his death while on a walk, a man and his kids were slashed by knives and stabbed, a woman was slapped and set on fire. Our community has been portrayed in such a negative way that hate towards Asian Americans has proliferated in such a devastating manner.



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More than ever we must protect our community, and this proposed AAPI commission would be a great step forward.

It would increase representation of the AAPI community. This representation is critical for change, as only when policy makers understand our concerns can we begin to see the change we desire.

Furthermore, this commission would promote education on AAPI culture/history. As Asian Americans, we hold a place in US history, one that is vastly under covered by the social studies curriculum. Even major supreme court cases like US v Wong Kim Arc were never taught to me in school. This commission would help to integrate those types of education to create mor acceptance within our community

Overall, for these reasons and so many more, I stand in strong support of bill CB72-2022 to ensure nobody ends up with a hole in their heart without a community, and nobody ends up like Ian from the Boy and the Beast. Thank you



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Ming Li, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Howard County Chinese School to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding CB72-2022 to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Ming Li

Signature: Ming Li

Digitally signed by Ming Li
DN: cn=Ming Li, o=Howard County Chinese School, ou, email=bod-chair@hccs-md.org, c=US
Date: 2022.10.17 17:02:51 -04'00'

Date: 10/17/2022

Organization: Howard County Chinese School

Organization Address: 10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, MD 21044

10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, MD 21044

Number of Members: 1000

Name of Chair/President: Ming Li

This form can be submitted electronically via email to councilmail@howardcountymd.gov no later than 2 hours prior to the start of the Public Hearing.