



Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon

(971) 340-4861

info@apano.org

www.apano.org

  @apanonews

Testimony in support of HB 2134 and -3 amendment

May 7, 2013, Joseph Santos Lyons, Executive Director
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO)

Thank you Chair and Members of the Committee.

My name is Joseph Santos-Lyons, Executive Director of APANO, the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon. We are a statewide community organization that works to ensure that Asians and Pacific Islanders are fully engaged in the social, economic and political issues that affect us.

We believe in an Oregon where everyone has access to the health care they need, and that good health is the foundation of community prosperity. For generations our communities have made contributions to our economy and society, yet some communities still face persistent disparities in health and human services. Despite our best efforts, real differences exist in the outcomes of various communities.

Serious data gaps and outdated collection practices exist for many communities in Oregon that result in inefficiency and higher costs. For example, collecting data on Asians and Pacific Islanders as “Other” or “Asian”, rules out meaningful use of data across agency programs. This lack of data masks expensive health disparities.

Oregon will benefit from consistent, accurate and useful data. This will allow programs and services to best meet the needs of our diverse communities. We know that the wrong focus equals the wrong results. What we measure matters in decision-making. Collecting accurate information about race, ethnicity, language and disability status in a practical, standardized, reliable and culturally appropriate format is an evidence based practice for addressing disparities and achieve better health outcomes for all.

You have before you the bill and we are finalizing the -3 amendment which we ask you to adopt..

HB 2134 gives rule-making authority to the Oregon Health Authority and Department of Human Services to adopt uniform standards based on best practices for the collection of data on race, ethnicity, language and disability status. Uniform standards will provide consistency and accuracy in order to adequately assess the status and needs of different groups.

The bill provides for ongoing stakeholder engagement and a review and update of standards every two years to stay current with best practices.

HB 2134 does not have an implementation deadline, but does require OHA and DHS to report back to the Legislature by June of 2014 on the uniform standards and plan implementation across the agencies.

The -3 Amendment, which we have worked on with OHA and DHS is a technical fix that ensures all DHS and OHA programs and surveys that collect demographic data are included, and that the agencies are required to begin implementing use of the standards where feasible and practical.



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This bill is supported by 48 community organizations and we have submitted over 20 letters of support from health and human service groups and professionals.

We want to make sure that all Oregonians get the best health care and human services possible. Thank you, I'm happy to answer any questions.

