

# Chinese American Citizens Alliance

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***The C.A.C.A. Portland Lodge's mission is three fold, to develop leadership, serve the community, and promote civil rights.***

March 14, 2017

Dear Chair Roblan and members of the Senate Committee on Education:

My name is Helen Ying. I live in Portland, Oregon and serve as the National Vice President of Membership for the Chinese American Citizens Alliance National Lodge and a Board Director for the Portland Lodge.

First and foremost, I want to thank you on behalf of the Portland Lodge for making this hearing possible for Senate Bill 280. Three years ago, a team representing our lodge came before you at the invitation of then Committee Chair, Senator Hass to present why it's important to include the Chinese American history in the U.S. history curriculum. Today, we are back with an expanded and more inclusive ask.

Oregon Social Studies teaching in school has been legislatively mandated to increase the inclusion of history of all Oregonians in its curricula for each grade, but the updated materials, training of faculty, and other resources have not been adequately funded by the legislature to accomplish this goal.

Having been educated in Oregon and being an educator in Oregon, it wasn't until 2009 that I learned about the history of Chinese Americans and how it related to me personally. As with the history of many in the communities of color, the Chinese American history has largely been omitted in the Oregon Social Studies teaching. Since then I have embarked on a journey to educate others about the Chinese American history including participating in the efforts of supporting the work of getting Congress to pass resolutions of apology for the Chinese Exclusion Act and the ensuing laws, meeting with Oregon legislators and Oregon Department of Education staff in the work of including Chinese American history in Oregon Studies, and traveling around Oregon sharing about Chinese American history in various locales.

Along the way, we learned that many in the communities of color share the same sentiments in the quest of inclusive history education in Oregon. We also learned that lack of funding from the legislature to Oregon Department of Education and school districts to support curriculum development and professional development has significantly slowed the implementation of the law - Senate Bill 739 (2013) - the needle on the dial of implementation is slight. The only shift at the Oregon Department of Education level is a website that is sparsely populated with resources. Each graduating class represents thousands of youthful Oregonians who need this inclusive education to be successful in today's world, valuing the contributions of all Oregonians in their lives and future workplaces. Each passing year without the funds to implement is opportunity lost for these growing minds.

This legislation would provide the necessary funding to achieve the goals and purposes of Senate Bill 739 (2013) to be inclusive of the history of all Oregonians in the Oregon classrooms. The earmarked funding would be made available to enable the Oregon Department of Education to provide staffing and resources in working with school districts to create a systematic plan for professional development and curriculum development for inclusive lessons of the history and contribution of all Oregonians.

Thank you so much for your support in making history studies in Oregon to include all Oregonians a reality.

Sincerely,

Helen L. Ying