

March 13, 2017

RE: Testimony in support of Senate Bill 280 scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> hearing

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

My name is Gloria Lee. I have lived in Oregon since 1979 and regard it as my home. I have served on the boards the Old Town Chinatown Community Association and volunteer with APANO and other Asian community organizations. I have also served on boards ranging from Travel Portland to Cedar Mill Community Library.

To live in a community that shares the values of compassion, understanding and tolerance, we must start young and remove the ignorance that currently exist in our communities regarding people who look different or identify differently. It is not enough to legislate inclusive Oregon social studies. It only becomes real when it is taught and evaluated. There are many community organizations that stand ready to help. Funding can mean the long term difference in de-escalating hate crimes, bullying and intolerance.

'We the people' includes me too. "

As the opening Executive Director of Lan Su Garden, I can attest to two things regarding education of young people in our schools.

ONE: The faces of curiosity, intrigue and delight in learning about cultures and societal differences when field trips came to the Garden and the discussions that ensued. These are the faces of hope who can take home what they learn and share with older siblings and parents who may fear anyone not like themselves. **Ignorance is removed by knowledge.** Quoting from <https://www.education.com/reference/article/definitions-social-studies/> "Social studies has the potential to be the best part of the school day because it is when children connect with other people. As children learn about others, they will be fascinated by differences among cultural groups, while at the same time they will find the commonalities that create a shared sense of humanity."

TWO: The explicit need and requests from overburdened teachers who wanted curriculum development and sought any information that met Oregon standards at appropriate grade levels. We can do this. We can take the first step. Funding is critical to begin the first step towards an inclusive history that reflects ALL Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Gloria Lee  
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