

Momentum Alliance
Testimony of Alexis Cannard
In Support of HB2845, Ethnic Studies
Before the House Education Committee
March 15th 2017



To: Chair Margaret Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee,
From: Alexis Cannard, Roosevelt High School
Date: March 13th, 2017
RE: HB 2845 Ethnic Studies

Chair Margaret Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee,

Hello, my name is Alexis Cannard and I am a senior at Roosevelt High School in Portland, Oregon. I have a passion for the arts, community, and advocating for the changes I wish to see in the world. I have grown up in the St. Johns neighborhood and have been a student in public schools in Oregon for the last 13 years of my life. I soon will be attending a university outside of Oregon, and I keep reflecting on my education. Oregon's education system has shaped me in many ways.

As a young Chinook Native and Pacific Islander woman who had little exposure to my own culture it is easy to say that I feel a lack of representation of my background within school environments and its curriculum. I feel my history is written in missing pages of our textbooks. This is why Ethnic Studies is so important to me.

We need to start to think critically and question everything. Ethnic studies will start conversations. It will spark the drive to seek change. We are here because we are demanding change- we are demanding to be taught our own histories. Discussions bring people together, builds relationships and capacity to organize for change and growth.

We need to build a collective force. We need to fight together for systemic change. We're here for ethnic studies because we all know it's important for us young people to know our history. To know that the first woman to run for president, was not Hillary Clinton...That the first black person to run for president, was not Barack Obama. It was Shirley Chisholm. Shirley Chisholm was the first black woman to run for president. Did you know that?

Ethnic studies is essential to break down barriers and stereotypes. Written by the people, for the people. Not just ethnic minorities, but those that are differently abled, LGBTQI, women, refugees and immigrants, those belonging to historically (and currently) marginalized communities. Ethnic studies will do this and much more. Relationships will be built. Students will be challenged and engaged. Young people will be more prepared to face the world equipped with the knowledge of history and self. The pathway for success begins with knowing the resiliency, passion, and contributions of our communities. Let's teach the whole history, not just bits and pieces.

It all starts by reading the "missing pages" in our history books. I urge you to support HB 2845.

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Momentum Alliance

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