



House Committee on Education
Re: HB 2023, Relating to inclusive education

March 11, 2019

Chair Doherty, Vice-Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair Helt, and Members of the Committee:
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2023, which would ensure that textbooks and educational materials include the vital contributions of historically marginalized communities, including communities of color. I am Jenny Lee, and I am the Advocacy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color.

The Coalition of Communities of Color is an alliance of culturally-specific community based organizations with representation from the following communities of color: African, African American, Asian, Latino, Middle Eastern, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Slavic. Our mission is to address the socioeconomic disparities, institutional racism and inequity of services experienced by our families, children and communities; and to organize our communities for collective action resulting in social change to obtain self-determination, wellness, justice and prosperity.

In 2017, the Coalition of Communities of Color strongly supported HB 2845, which directed the State Board of Education to adopt ethnic studies standards into existing K-12 social studies standards. This current legislation builds upon the ethnic studies standards by requiring inclusive textbooks and instructional materials. HB 2023 would ensure that social studies materials will include some instruction on the contributions of people of color, women, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, and LGBTQ individuals and communities.

When students see themselves in our state and country's history, they see themselves as part of our future. We must ensure that the experiences and contributions of all communities are made visible. Inclusive education fosters greater understanding among peers and a more positive school environment. As the number of students of color grows in Oregon, it's critical that all students learn about the histories, perspectives, and contributions of our various communities. This legislation is an important piece of that effort.

Thank you,

Jenny Lee
Advocacy Director
Coalition of Communities of Color

