



February 1, 2022

**Re: Support for HB 4112**

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 4112. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Deputy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC), an alliance of culturally specific community-based organizations engaged in collective action for racial justice.

CCC is heartened to see the early enthusiasm from many school districts as they embark on implementing the Ethnic Studies standards, with strong support from the community. As we put these standards into effect, the state has a responsibility to provide robust training to our K–12 teachers. Just like any other state educational standards, we need to invest in professional development: educators who are well-versed and confident in their knowledge are key to providing our students with the best possible education.

In 2017, CCC joined with our member organization APANO and other advocates to advocate for the nationally groundbreaking passage of HB 2845 requiring Ethnic Studies curriculum in grades K–12. Passed with bipartisan support, we must now prioritize supporting our teachers in implementation of these standards. CCC supported this legislation because when all students see themselves represented in their curriculum, and have the opportunity to learn about their classmates' diverse histories and communities, every student benefits. Applied rigorously, this enriches their educational experience as they learn about our diversifying state. Professional development for teachers is essential to achieve this rigor.

Ethnic studies brings overall benefit to our schools and teachers as they themselves learn from these standards, helping them make learning more inclusive and accessible for all students. As we expect teachers to reduce disparities in educational outcomes so that every student achieves excellence, we must equip them with the tools and training to do so. This is a powerful opportunity to improve the overall school climate for all students, and now we must keep our promise to make investments that support our teachers.

On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, I ask that you support HB 4112 to invest in professional development for educators as we implement these standards and advance excellence for every student.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Lee', is written over the typed name.

Jenny Lee  
Deputy Director  
Coalition of Communities of Color