



February 1st, 2022

Chair Teresa Alonso Leon
Vice-Chair Courtney Neron
Vice-Chair Suzanne Weber
Members of the House Education Committee

RE: HB 4112: relating to Ethnic Studies Professional Development

Good afternoon Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chairs Neron and Weber, and members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Des Spicer Orak, my pronouns are she/they, and I am with APANO (the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon) as the Youth Health Organizer. I am testifying today on behalf of our organization's support for HB 4112, known as the Professional Development for Ethnic Studies bill.

APANO is a multi-issue organization that aims to provide civic engagement, access, and capacity building opportunities for Asian/Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander communities. Specifically in my role as youth health organizer, I deeply invest in and implement educational programming for youth at all intersections of their health. Undeniably, education is an intersection of holistic health that dramatically impacts the wellbeing of our youth membership base. This base contains mostly high school students between the ages of 13-18, who are both vigorous and passionate about their education, and its quality.

By providing professional development for culturally specific education to students in Oregon, we are honoring the intersections of their experiences, and providing an environment in which they can embrace curiosity and resonance, and upholding the promise that was made to students. Additionally, this development provides intentional support to educators, who already work tirelessly to meet the multidimensional needs of students as they implement Ethnic Studies standards in K-12 schools.

Oregon has an undeniable responsibility to honor students, and ensure that Ethnic Studies standards passed in previous legislation has the necessary investments to be equitably implemented. This can only be done by providing appropriate resources and training to educators who have one of the greatest impacts on students' learning and growth.

I urge you to vote yes on HB 4112 to ensure that our youth have access to education that reflects, honors, and uplifts them for all that they are capable of. Thank you for your time, and your commitment to supporting educators and students statewide.

Sincerely,
Des Spicer Orak, Youth Health Organizer (APANO)