

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1546

To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs that include the history of peoples of Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander descent in the settling and founding of America, the social, economic, and political environments that led to the development of discriminatory laws targeting Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and their relation to current events, and the impact and contributions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders to the development and enhancement of American life, United States history, literature, the economy, politics, body of laws, and culture, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 10, 2023

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. LUJÁN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs that include the history of peoples of Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander descent in the settling and founding of America, the social, economic, and political environments that led to the development of discriminatory laws targeting Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and their relation to current events, and the impact and contributions of Asian Americans, Native

Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders to the development and enhancement of American life, United States history, literature, the economy, politics, body of laws, and culture, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Teaching Asian Pacific
 5 American History Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The United States has benefitted from the
 9 integral role Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
 10 have played in our Nation’s history and contribu-
 11 tions to the world.

12 (2) The Pacific Island Territories of Guam,
 13 American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the
 14 Northern Mariana Islands, and all of the Pacific Is-
 15 lands, including Melanesia, Micronesia, and Poly-
 16 nesia, have unique histories that are often over-
 17 looked in American history despite their immense
 18 contributions to our Nation.

19 (3) The traditional American history curriculum
 20 for kindergarten through grade 12 continues to be
 21 taught from a Eurocentric point of view and ex-

1 includes histories of racist immigration laws relevant
2 to policies today.

3 (4) Social studies textbooks for kindergarten
4 through grade 12 poorly represent Asian Americans
5 and Pacific Islanders, overlook the diversity within
6 those communities, and print images of Asian Amer-
7 icans and Pacific Islanders in stereotypical roles.

8 (5) The Federal Government, through support
9 for educational activities of national museums estab-
10 lished under Federal law, can assist teachers in ef-
11 forts to incorporate historically accurate instruction
12 on the comprehensive history of Asian Americans
13 and Pacific Islanders and assist students in their ex-
14 ploration of Asian Pacific American history as an in-
15 tegral part of American history.

16 (6) The history of America's system of immi-
17 gration is rife with racism, embedded with goals of
18 hiring workers to work for cheaper wages and labor
19 in heinous working conditions.

20 (7) Congress has continuously passed anti-
21 Asian laws as the result of the scapegoating of Asian
22 immigrant laborers for economic downturns in the
23 United States.

24 (8) The history of South Asian Americans in
25 the United States dates back to the late 1700s.

1 (9) The history of Native Hawaiians and Pa-
2 cific Islanders in what is now considered to be the
3 United States predates the founding of our Nation.

4 (10) In 1993, Congress passed a joint resolu-
5 tion that was signed into law formally apologizing
6 for the role of the United States in the illegal over-
7 throw of the Kingdom of Hawaii, which resulted in
8 the suppression of the inherent sovereignty of the
9 Native Hawaiian people.

10 (11) Twelve thousand Chinese laborers worked
11 in atrocious conditions to build the Transcontinental
12 Railroad, many dying from harsh weather conditions
13 and the dangers of handling explosives.

14 (12) The Page Act of 1875, the first restrictive
15 immigration law in the United States, sought to pre-
16 vent the entry of Asian women perceived as immoral
17 or suspected of prostitution.

18 (13) After the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882
19 banned Chinese immigrants from immigrating to the
20 United States, Japanese immigrants were hired.
21 After the Japanese were banned from immigrating
22 due to the Gentleman's Agreement of 1907, which
23 halted immigration from Japan, Filipino immigrants
24 were hired under 3-year contracts.

1 (14) Filipino farm workers helped found the
2 farm worker labor movement in the United States.

3 (15) The Immigration Act of 1917 restricted
4 immigration to the United States by barring immi-
5 gration from the Asia-Pacific zone.

6 (16) The Immigration Act of 1924 set a na-
7 tional origin quota to deter immigration.

8 (17) President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Execu-
9 tive Order 9066 authorized the incarceration of
10 more than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry,
11 two-thirds of whom were American citizens, based
12 solely on race.

13 (18) Beginning in 1954, the United States dis-
14 placed more than 3,000,000 refugees from Cam-
15 bodia, Laos, and Vietnam due to covert and overt
16 United States military operations in Southeast Asia.

17 (19) The Immigration Act of 1965 made family
18 unification and skills-based migration the bedrock
19 principle of immigration to the United States.

20 (20) The nuclear testing conducted by the
21 United States on the Bikini and Enewetak Atoll of
22 the Marshall Islands has made parts of the island
23 nation uninhabitable and caused forced migration
24 and health complications that still impact the com-
25 munity today.

1 (21) The United States ratified a Compact of
2 Free Association with the Federated States of Mi-
3 cronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the
4 Republic of Palau enabling citizens of these Pacific
5 Island nations to legally migrate to the United
6 States visa-free while the United States retains cer-
7 tain strategic military rights over their territorial
8 waters.

9 (22) In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the
10 Refugee Act of 1980 helped more than 500,000
11 Southeast Asians gain permanent resident status in
12 the United States within the first decade of its pas-
13 sage.

14 (23) The Pacific Islander community represents
15 the largest concentration of any ethnic group en-
16 listed in the United States military, as well as rep-
17 resenting the highest numbers of casualties in recent
18 wars.

19 (24) The “model minority” myth perpetuates
20 the stigma of Asian Americans as perpetual for-
21 eigners, and such stereotypes are used to pit minor-
22 ity groups against one another.

23 (25) The pattern of hate crimes and hate inci-
24 dents directed at Asians and Asian Americans has
25 repeated itself throughout history.

1 (26) Asian American and African American his-
 2 tories of fighting against oppression and racism are
 3 intertwined, from the Black Power Movement of the
 4 1960s that birthed the Asian American Movement to
 5 civil rights protests in present day.

6 (27) Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and
 7 their allies continue to fight discrimination, racial
 8 prejudice, hate crimes, scapegoating, structural rac-
 9 ism, economic inequities, and benign and overt omis-
 10 sion of the integral role they played in the develop-
 11 ment of this Nation.

12 **SEC. 3. AMERICAN HISTORY AND CIVICS EDUCATION.**

13 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—Section 2231(a) of the
 14 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
 15 U.S.C. 6661(a)) is amended—

16 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by
 17 inserting “, which shall include Asian Pacific Amer-
 18 ican history,” after “American history”; and

19 (2) in paragraph (2)—

20 (A) by inserting “which shall include Asian
 21 Pacific American history,” after “American his-
 22 tory,”; and

23 (B) by inserting “, which shall include
 24 Asian Pacific American history” after “tradi-
 25 tional American history”.

1 (b) PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACADEMIES
 2 FOR AMERICAN HISTORY AND CIVICS.—Section 2232 of
 3 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
 4 U.S.C. 6662) is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (c)(1), by inserting “, which
 6 shall include Asian Pacific American history,” after
 7 “American history”;

8 (2) in subsection (e)—

9 (A) in paragraph (1)—

10 (i) in the matter preceding subpara-
 11 graph (A), by inserting “, which shall in-
 12 clude Asian Pacific American history,”
 13 after “American history”;

14 (ii) in subparagraph (A)—

15 (I) by inserting “, which shall in-
 16 clude Asian Pacific American his-
 17 tory,” after “teachers of American
 18 history”; and

19 (II) by inserting “, which shall
 20 include Asian Pacific American his-
 21 tory,” after “subjects of American
 22 history”; and

23 (iii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting
 24 “, which shall include Asian Pacific Amer-
 25 ican history,” after “American history”;

1 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, which
 2 shall include Asian Pacific American history,”
 3 after “American history”; and

4 (C) in paragraph (4), by inserting “, and
 5 with the Smithsonian Institution’s Asian Pacific
 6 American Center to provide programs and re-
 7 sources for educators and students” after “Na-
 8 tional Parks”; and

9 (3) in paragraph (1) of subsection (f)—

10 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
 11 (A), by inserting “including Asian Pacific
 12 American history” after “American history”;

13 (B) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “,
 14 which shall include Asian Pacific American his-
 15 tory,” after “American history”; and

16 (C) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “,
 17 which shall include Asian Pacific American his-
 18 tory,” after “American history”.

19 (c) NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—Section 2233 of the Ele-
 20 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
 21 6663) is amended—

22 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “which shall
 23 include Asian Pacific American history,” after
 24 “American history,”; and

25 (2) in subsection (b)—

1 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
2 by inserting “which shall include Asian Pacific
3 American history,” after “American history,”;
4 and

5 (B) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting
6 “which shall include Asian Pacific American
7 history,” after “American history,”.

8 (d) NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
9 PROGRESS.—Section 303(b)(2)(D) of the National As-
10 sessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20
11 U.S.C. 9622(b)(2)(D)) is amended by inserting “(which
12 shall include Asian Pacific American history)” after “his-
13 tory”.

○