

February 16, 2025

State Capitol, Room 30
State of Alaska
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Elvi Gray Jackson,

I write in support of Senate Bill 6 requiring education and history contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to be taught in kindergarten through grade 12 in Alaska. Alaska is a diverse state comprised of nearly 85,000 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, yet school curriculum lacks a reflection of this representation in history courses. Children often learn best when they can connect to and relate to stories they are taught; by seeing themselves or their family members in the characters. Showing the contributions of people of their own heritage, cultural experiences, and celebrations can elevate the learning experience of our children and provide personalized motivation and inspiration so they can optimize their future aspirations.

The affirmation of the study of race has a place in education is important because some people may have the stereotype of focusing on, say, math and science, and not on the kinds of critical conversations that are necessary for building an engaged, tolerant, accepting of other cultures, and mores of other citizens in America today.

In addition, we see Asian American history as one critical part of combating the rise in anti-Asian racism and sentiment. Without understanding why Asian Americans have been scapegoated for things like the pandemic, it's hard to stop that behavior from escalating into the incidents of harassment or violence." Say Grace Pei executive director of Advancing Justice, Chicago. On the other hand, we must speak of the 12,000 Chinese immigrants who constructed the western section of the Transcontinental Railroad from 1865-1869. – one of the greatest engineering feats in America.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca Carrillo".

Rebecca Carrillo