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Lusiana Hansen
CEO Polynesian Association of Alaska

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Reference: SB 131

Dear Senator Gray-Jackson,

My name is Lusiana Hansen. I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 131, an act requiring education in the history and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

I have been a resident of Anchorage, Alaska of 39 years and am a Parent, Grandparent from the Pacific Island. For 39 years since I arrived in Anchorage Alaska, our AAPI community in Anchorage triple its number each each. Samoan Language is the 3rd highest language in Anchorage School District. That means we are here making Alaska our home.

AAPI population growth size in Alaska for 2024 is 84,001 that about 33.5% since 2012. Eligible AAPI voters, 48,658, 28.9% AAPI voter eligibility growth (2012-2022), AAPI citizen voting age population for 50+ about 32.2%, and aged 18-29 about 29.4%.

The importance of Language Access, 55.6% of Asian and Pacific Islanders adults in AK speak a language other than English at home. 31.5% of them are limited English proficient. There are 8 top AANHPI languages spoken in AK, Tagalog (19,942), Hmong (4,800), Korean (3,629) Samoan (3,552), Chinese (1,813), Vietnamese (1,134), Other Eastern Malayo Polynesian language (231) and Chamorro (204).

We know that AAPI is growing fast each year, and therefore it is all important and right for all students to have access of the AAPI history and language add to our State of Alaska Public School curriculum. This is very important to all students to understand and learn about the AAPI culture and language.

Teaching Asian American and Pacific Islander history, language and culture is important because it's what shapes our beliefs and values and influences our behaviors. It will have a more well-rounded approach to the way we engage with other human beings. But it will also pave the way for a new world where we all stand together.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Lusiana Hansen
Anchorage, Alaska
CEO/PAOA