



CONSULATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA
ANCHORAGE

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Finance Committee Members
Alaska State Senate
United States of America

April 22, 2024

Dear Honorable Finance Committee Members of Alaska State Senate,

I am writing this letter to express my sincere support for the introduction of the Senate Bill 131, "An Act requiring education in the history and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander".

I know that American history is the story of many immigrants seeking freedom and prosperity coming from all around the world. This legacy of freedom, diversity, and inclusivity in the United States has blossomed into the spirit of democracy, which thrives, and not only US. but also many nations around the world continue to uphold this democratic spirit.

Since the independence in 1776, the United States has consistently advanced the spirit of pluralism. All forms of discrimination against minority races have been abolished, and American people built up the great country through milestones such as Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Civil Right Movement and Act in 1960s. And schools educate future generation about the remarkable progress of American history.

But unfortunately, it seems that Asia-Pacific American's history, culture and their contributions are relatively less well-known in the United States, despite American education promotes values such as diversity and inclusion.

For example, Korean American's immigration history spans over 120 years now. Since the first Koreans came to Hawaii, US as sugarcane plantation labor workers, currently there are more than two million Korean Americans residing in across the United States, who work in the various fields and devote themselves for the developments of America.

Here in Alaska also, significant numbers, around 7 thousand Korean Americans are living now. They are dedicated themselves to various fields such as the military, law enforcement, nursing, education, and various small business enhancing diversity in Alaska, becoming a part of indispensable social fabric.



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Not only Korean Americans but also multiple Asian-Pacific Americans including Japanese, Chinese, Pilipino, Vietnamese Americans and others, have brought rich cultural diversities to the American society and contributed to the development of America consistently.

Moreover, Asia-Pacific American's population increased steadily in the US. In case of Alaska, the percentage of Asia-Pacific Americans is less than 1% before 1970, but currently the percentage of them increased over 8% of total Alaska population.

Hence, it is important that their contributions taught in public education system. Rich cultural heritage of Asians and Pacific Islanders has greatly influenced the cultural diversity and therefore must be passed down to the future generation.

I hope that through the legislation of "An act requiring education in the history and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders" their history and contributions to American society could be well taught in schools in the State of Alaska.

Through this, I am confident that Alaska's youth will develop a broader understanding of the diverse minority groups in Alaska, leading to further advancement in social solidarity and awareness within Alaska's society.

I avail myself of this opportunity to assure to all the Finance Committee Members my highest consideration.

Best regards,

Joongsuk Park
Consul & Head

Consulate of the Republic of Korea in Anchorage

