



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2021

MEDIA CONTACT

Josh Koehn

Josh.Koehn@asm.ca.gov

API Legislative Caucus Priority Legislation on Ethnic Studies Signed Into Law

SACRAMENTO, CA – Today, the Asian Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus thanks Governor Newsom for signing Assembly Bill (AB) 101 authored by Assemblymember Jose Medina. AB 101 is an API Legislative Caucus policy priority that makes California the first state to require high school students to learn ethnic studies as a part of their graduation requirement.

California is the most diverse state in the nation and ethnic studies helps all students foster a better understanding of different cultures while also allowing them to value their own cultural identity. Ethnic studies is particularly important to the AAPI community because our stories are often never told or taught in schools despite being the fastest growing racial group. As a result, many do not understand the cultural norms, and complex histories and struggles that face the diverse AAPI community. This lack of comprehension contributes to rises in Anti-Asian hate incidents. Requiring ethnic studies in high school will be a key first step in combating racism for future generations.

“I thank and congratulate the author of AB101, Assemblymember Jose Medina, for his persistent leadership to ensure California students learn about our great state and country inclusive of the diversity of California by requiring ethnic studies to graduate high school, and for including AAPI experiences that have too often been made invisible in the curriculum,” said **Dr. Richard Pan, Senator and Chair of the API Legislative Caucus**. “The API Legislative Caucus is also grateful to Governor Newsom for signing this landmark bill and listening to our diverse communities to make California a more inclusive state.”

“Like many people who grew up in California, it wasn’t until college that I learned the full story of the Chinese American experience, as well as the story of so many other communities of color,” said **Assemblymember Evan Low (D-Silicon Valley), Vice Chair of the API**

Legislative Caucus. “For decades, California schools have failed to acknowledge the humanity, dignity, and struggle of so many people. I’d like to thank Assemblymember Medina for introducing this vital ethnic studies bill, and I’m grateful to Gov. Newsom for signing AB 101 into law. We won’t necessarily right the wrongs of the past, but teaching our true history will help us avoid repeating these mistakes as we seek to create a more accepting, inclusive society.”

###

The California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus represents and advocates for the interests of the diverse API communities throughout California. It seeks to increase Asian Pacific Islander participation and representation in all levels of government.

Website of the California API Legislative Caucus: <http://apicaucus.legislature.ca.gov>