

Tuesday, January 31st, 2023

Dear Chair Gilbert and distinguished members of the Rules Committee,

Thank you so much for your time. My name is Alexander Ra. I've been a resident of Fairfax County, Virginia for all my life of 14 years and I currently attend Centreville High School in Fairfax County. Today, I am here to express the importance of HB 2440 and my support for this bill.

The Covid Pandemic was a bad time for us all but, many of us, Asians also had to bear unprecedented hate against us. When my family went on a family trip to an outdoor hot spring two years ago, we were approached by this lady who seemed agitated. She went up to my family and told us "I know what you're doing to poison this country, go back to yours". I am a proud American who was born and grew up in this county yet, I was still seen as a foreigner who didn't deserve to be here in the eyes of this lady. This is just one example of hate and bullying Asian community has to face every day.

Because we belong here, I am sincerely asking for your help. I believe including Asian American history and culture in classrooms will give Asian Americans more representation we desperately need in this country especially with the younger generation as myself.

With the ongoing increase in anti-Asian American bullying, hate, and violence, I urge this committee to pass HB 2440 with urgency. Please favorably vote HB 2440 out of the Rules Committee today.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Alexander Ra

Fairfax County, Virginia