

Alex Wu
Scarborough
LD 2001

Hello, my name is Alex Wu and I am a junior at Scarborough High School. I urge you to vote ought to pass on LD 2001, An Act to Establish the African American Studies Advisory Council and Require Funding for African American Studies.

Though I am not African American, as a member of multiple marginalized communities, I can attest to the importance of representation in education. The first time I ever saw a teacher that was asian was in highschool. Until then all my teachers had been White, and my curriculum was and still is primarily focused on the work of White individuals.

I acknowledge that this act is not a supplementation of the demographic makeup of Maine, but acknowledging the history of POC people helps make up for that lack of representation we find in our teachers. I have learned since highschool about things like the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the 1888 Scott Act, the 1892 Geary Act, all based in the prevention of Chinese immigration into the country. These are acts that are specifically related to Chinese oppression in the country, but I had never learned about inside of the school curriculum despite its relevance to my identity as a Chinese-American.

Like with the Acts I have stated, the history of the U.S. is that of African American oppression, and it is important to learn about it. Students POC or not should know about systems of oppression so we never repeat them ever again.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee.