



Policy Recommendation Document

Presented to: Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm

May 9, 2006

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We would like to thank all of the appointed members who serve on ACAPAA, for their time, talents, commitment and leadership in helping to draft this policy document.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Introduction

This is a policy recommendation document presented to Governor Jennifer M. Granholm of Michigan by the Governor’s Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs (ACAPAA). This document is in response to Executive Order 2005-10, providing mandates to review and advise the Governor of the nature, magnitude, and priorities of issues facing the Asian Pacific American (APA)¹ community.

In its work, the ACAPAA has determined five key areas as priorities for the APA community in the State of Michigan.

1. **Civil Rights:** To create an educational initiative to increase the awareness, education, and involvement of the APA community on civil rights issues, laws and applications
2. **Immigration:** To educate employers and prospective/current APA workers in Michigan on basic immigration laws
3. **Health:** To create an APA health initiative that includes equal access to the health care system
4. **Education I:** To create strategies for inclusion of APA content in Michigan K-12 curriculum
5. **Education II:** To promote participation of APA leadership in educational governance and professional development

As reported by the U.S. Census, the APA population in Michigan grew to over 208,000 people in 2000. APAs are one of the largest minority groups in the state. APAs are the second fastest growing immigrant group in the U.S. and Michigan, and yet the least empowered and recognized. The members of ACAPAA wish to make a difference – to empower and recognize APAs and stay true to our mission: **To advance the full and equal participation of Asian Pacific Americans in the building of “One Michigan.”**

B. APA Demographics

Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) are a fast growing ethnic group in the United States today, and include people with origins from across Asia and the Pacific. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 11.9 million people identified themselves as individuals of Asian descent and 874,000 people, as Pacific Islanders, representing about 4.2% of the U.S. population. This represents a 72% increase in population over the past decade. In Michigan, the APA population grew to over 208,000 people in 2000, a 101.3% increase from 1990.

¹ The term Asian Pacific American (APA) is used in this document to identify an individual of Asian descent having U.S. citizenship or permanent residency in the U.S. with the intent of becoming a U.S. citizen.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "an Asian American is a person having origins in any of the Far East Asian countries, South East Asian countries and the Indian sub continent."² The U.S. Census Bureau also describes Pacific Americans as people from the islands of Hawaii, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Territory of Guam, and Republic of Palau and Republic of Marshall Islands. APAs originate from nearly fifty countries and ethnic groups with distinct cultures, traditions, and histories. APAs speak over 100 languages and dialects. Almost 75% of APAs state that they speak a language other than English at home, while close to 40% of APAs self-identify as limited in English proficiency (2000 Census).

The census demographics have also shattered the myth of "model minority." The popular myth perpetuates the notion that all the APAs are educated, successful, passive, compliant, and overachieving. Further, the belief holds that all APAs have integrated into the larger American society without problems or needs. The census data revealed that APAs are found at the extreme spectrums of almost every socioeconomic indicator from wealth to poverty, from advanced education to illiteracy, from entrepreneurial success to marginal daily survival (2000 Census).

C. Five Priority Initiatives

1. Civil Rights

To create an educational initiative to increase the awareness, education and involvement of the APA community on civil rights issues, laws and applications.

Hate Crime

ACAPAA believes that while the civil rights climate in Michigan has improved since the 1980's for APAs, racial and ethnic-based hate and anti-APA hate crimes remain an issue for the community. The watershed Asian Pacific American civil rights case occurred in Michigan with the death of Vincent Chin in 1982. Relating to the present, considering the current economic climate and short-term outlook in our state, the APA community is concerned about the real potential for anti-APA sentiment as a result – particularly given the condition of the manufacturing sector and the perceived impact of outsourcing of jobs to Asian countries. Moreover the APA community is also concerned about the cultural biases that have developed, in a post-9/11 context, based on both nationality and religion. While data on anti-APA violence is incomplete nationally, the existing data shows a disturbingly high level of violence against APAs. In 2002, the last year of accumulated data by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, 275 bias motivated hate crimes against APAs were documented in the U.S.

Workplace Discrimination

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), in 2004 (four decades after passing of the Federal Civil Right's legislation, Title VII), commissioned the Gallup Organization to conduct the status report of equal opportunity at the workplace. The findings are highly discouraging. According to the report, 38% of APAs experienced discrimination at work, a percentage that was the largest among the minority groups. The "glass ceiling,"³ a phrase that some APAs have termed the "steel ceiling," seems to be the highest concern. This may explain why only 3% of those who perceive discrimination actually file charges. ACAPAA believes that the Gallup sample is representative and applicable to the APA population in Michigan.

² "Asian Americans" include people originating from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, and other places located in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

³ Glass ceiling refers to barriers, either real or perceived, that affect the promotion or hiring of protected group members.

Under-representation

In Michigan, APAs are under-represented in government, elected offices, the judicial system, political appointments, and in the make up of the staff of elected officials. Also, APAs remain under-represented in the administration of both K-12 and university programs. Promotion of political awareness in the APA community will empower the APA community. Such actions would increase the numbers of APAs in government, elected offices, political appointments, and staff of elected officials.

Affirmative Action

The 2006 Michigan Ballot includes a proposal to amend the Michigan Constitution. Termed the "Michigan Civil Rights Initiative," if passed, a new section of Article I will be added to the State Constitution, prohibiting state and local government from using race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin as a factor for public employment and in public education. ACAPAA is in favor of affirmative action and believes that the proposal, if passed, would have a negative effect on the civil rights climate in Michigan as it affects APAs.

Conclusion

To address the above issues, the ACAPAA Civil Rights Initiative calls for educational programs to increase the awareness, education and involvement of the APA community on civil rights issues, laws and applications.

2. Immigration

To educate employers and prospective/current APA workers in Michigan on basic immigration laws.

APAs now make over 2% of Michigan's population with over 208,000 APAs calling Michigan their home. While 5% of Michigan's total population is foreign born, 67% of Michigan's APA population was born outside of the United States. Notably, foreign-born APAs in Michigan have a 41% naturalization rate. These statistics highlight the importance of immigration to the APA community. As increased numbers of APAs take residence in Michigan, they will continue to play a vital role in the state's economy. Furthermore, the median age of the APA population (28.7 years) translates into a higher number of APAs either in the workforce or higher education.

Because many APAs are first generation citizens, they often face barriers in navigating the system with respect to immigration, education, and employment. One participant in an ACAPAA Town Hall Meeting illustrated this point by stating, "As a first generation immigrant, we usually do not automatically know all the rights, laws, and other common rules as other people who grow up in this country."

To address these issues, the ACAPAA Immigration Initiative seeks to develop programs to educate Michigan employers and current/prospective APA immigrant⁴ workers on their rights and obligations under current immigration laws. All Michigan citizens stand to gain from better understanding of APAs and the APA immigrant community. A better and more accurate public perception of APA immigrants will lead to a more diverse workforce and community, and contribute to a stronger Michigan economy.

⁴ The term, "immigrant," is used broadly in this document to include those with or without permanent residency in the U.S.

3. Health

To create an APA health initiative that includes equal access to the health care system.

The goal of the health initiative is to address health care disparities among the APA population in Michigan. These disparities have been documented regarding unequal access to screening, diagnosis, and medical treatment, resulting in poorer health care outcomes in medically underprivileged populations.

In the Michigan health care system, a lack of health care access among APAs has been identified as the major obstacle to addressing health disparities in the APA community. Surveys and individual testimonies from ACAPAA Town Hall Meetings in early 2006 identified lack of access as a prevalent problem. In addition, multiple research and policy documents discuss limited access for APAs, including the Institute of Medicine's Commission to End Health Care Disparities, the 2001 White House Initiative on APAs, and the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Care Forum documents.

4. Education I: APA Content in K-12 Curriculum

To create strategies for inclusion of APA content in Michigan K-12 curriculum.

APAs are "Missing in History" as taught in classrooms, more than often they are invisible and relegated to a residual category of "others." Diversifying the K-12 curriculum would benefit the statewide Michigan population. It would prepare Michigan's high school graduates to interact with students from diverse backgrounds on college campuses and beyond. Michigan residents statewide can benefit from the increased capacity of its youth to understand intra-community and cross-cultural interactions. As Michigan's population increases in diversity, the content of public education has not kept pace in preparing citizens to be culturally competent in a diverse society. Michigan's success is dependent on how we prepare our youth to meet the new demands of the 21st Century.

5. Education II: Governance and Professional Development

To promote participation of APA leadership in educational governance and professional development.

Governance

Michigan's public schools reflect little representation of APAs at all levels of educational administration and governance, such as local school district Boards of Education and other education policy-making bodies for K-16 curriculum and academic programs. Greater APA participation would contribute to the rich and diverse leadership at all K-16 levels and would provide positive role models for Michigan youth.

Professional Development

To be successful citizens, our students need an expansive curriculum that includes content related to diversity issues and sensitivity for individual differences. Our educators need rigorous teacher preparation programs with ongoing professional development in order to effectively support the curriculum and educate our increasingly diverse student population.

D. Overall Recommendations

The Asian Pacific Americans in Michigan experience prejudice, disparate treatment, and discrimination in labor market participation, multiple facets of education (curriculum and governance), opportunities as immigrants, and health care access. Given these findings, we strongly recommend the following to the Governor:

- 1. Establishment of the Advisory Council on Asian Pacific Americans as a permanent body:** To empower the Council to initiate policy directives, we recommend the establishment of ACAPAA as a permanent Type I Commission within the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. As a permanent body, the Council can provide the impetus for interventions by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights
- 2. Accurate data collection, analysis, and dissemination:** There is an overwhelming need for improving data collection, analysis and dissemination on APAs, relating to civil rights, immigration, health, education, housing, and criminal justice. Data drives almost all federal and state programs and services. Without specific and accurate data, APAs may not be included in these programs and services.
- 3. Cultural competence in schools and workplace:** It is important to increase cultural understanding in educational and workplace institutions to enable people to serve and work effectively cross-culturally. Providing linguistic access and cultural awareness will increase the participation of APAs as providers and consumers. APAs speak over 100 languages/dialects and like other immigrant groups, many of them have Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

Conclusion

All of the above recommendations are made in the spirit of realizing the Governor's vision of building "One Michigan" in which all Michigan citizens participate fully in the rich fabric of Michigan life. The Asian Pacific Americans are here to help reshape the Michigan economy and make our contribution. The Governor's Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs is ready to lead and collaborate with various leaders to bring the APA community to a position of strength, acceptance, and full participation. With strengthened empowerment of the community, the Asian Pacific Americans will be that much more valuable to the entire region.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Forming of the Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs (ACAPAA)

The Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs was created by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm in May 2005. As stated in Executive Order 2005-10, the Council shall act in an advisory capacity to the Governor and the Director (of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights) and shall do all of the following:

1. Review and advise the Governor and the Director on the state's policies concerning the Asian Pacific American community
2. Review and advise the Governor and the Director of the nature, magnitude, and priorities of the issues facing the Asian Pacific American community
3. Monitor, evaluate, investigate, and recommend programs for the betterment of Asian Pacific Americans in Michigan
4. Analyze and recommend policies and programs to advance economic development within the Asian Pacific American community and related policies and programs to increase exports by Michigan companies to Asia and the Pacific
5. Make recommendations to the Governor and the Director regarding changes in state programs, statutes, regulations, and policies, including, but not limited to, the coordination of state programs serving Asian Pacific Americans
6. Recommend policy and action plans to serve the needs of Asian Pacific Americans in Michigan
7. Recognize the history, accomplishments, and contributions of Michigan's Asian Pacific American community
8. Make recommendations to the Governor and the Director regarding methods of overcoming discrimination against Asian Pacific Americans
9. Promote public awareness of Asian Pacific American cultures
10. Promote equal access to state services
11. Promote the involvement of Asian Pacific Americans in government at all levels

B. Process of Selecting the Priority Initiatives

The Council chose to engage in an intentional and fair process to identify and select the priority issues that affect the APA community. Below is an action item list in chronology describing action taken since June 2005. This document describes these five initiatives.

1. June 2005: Creation of seven committees, i.e., Business, Civil Rights, Demographics, Education, Health, Immigration and Overall Committees
2. August 2005: Presentation of ten issues and initiatives by the committees
3. October 2005: Discussion and selection of criteria to consider in selecting the top five out of ten initiatives
4. December 2005: Selection of the top five

5. February 2006: An inclusive community outreach. In order to receive feedback from the APA community on the top five initiatives, ACAPAA hosted Town Hall Meetings in Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids, Lansing, and the Detroit Tri-county area. Further input and feedback were sought from individuals and community organizations through ethnic newspapers, ACAPAA website, and an email campaign
6. March 2006: A strategic planning meeting to produce written information on each initiative
7. Expert presentations from Mr. Kurt Metzger on the APA demographics, Dean Frank Wu on Affirmative Action, Director Teri Takai on the Department of Information and Technology, and Director Linda Parker on the Department of Civil Rights further aided in conceptualization of the initiatives
8. The engagement of an organizational consultant, Mr. Michael Roblee, offered critical objectivity throughout the entire process

The other five initiatives in the order of ranking by ACAPAA are as follows:

1. Education: Create strategies to address pre K-16 access of APA in Michigan schools and universities
2. Demographics: Identify a state government department and provide funding to coordinate, update and disseminate data collection regarding APA population
3. Business: Develop a comprehensive incentive package and a coordinated process to attract Asian businesses to invest in Michigan
4. Health (Domestic violence): Create an APA initiative against domestic violence by providing a permanent mechanism to track, treat and educate the APA population against acts of domestic violence
5. Immigration (Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools or CGFNS): Assisting in the removal of CGFNS as a requirement for employment of foreign nurses in Michigan

Even though the discussions of the above initiatives are not included in this document, their relevance and importance to the APA community stand along with those included.

III. FIVE PRIORITY INITIATIVES (DETAIL)

A. Civil Rights Initiative

To create an educational initiative to increase the awareness, education and involvement of the APA community on civil rights issues, laws and applications.

Overview of the problem

Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) have spent the last two centuries fighting for equality in the eyes of law, law enforcement, courts and public opinion. APAs are highly under-represented in politics, and have been marginalized throughout most of the political debate over affirmative action. Too often, APAs are not seen as people of color who face prejudice and discrimination.

Data on anti-APA violence is incomplete. The National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium (NAPALC) conducts the only comprehensive, nationwide, non-governmental audit of anti-APA violence in the United States. In 2002, NAPALC documented 275 bias-motivated hate crimes against APAs. Hate crimes against APAs continue to show a disturbingly high level of violence.

History and background

Hate crime

ACAPAA believes that while the civil rights climate in Michigan has improved since the 1980's for APAs, racial and ethnic-based hate and anti-APA hate crimes remain an issue for the community. The watershed Asian Pacific American civil rights case occurred in Michigan. On June 19, 1982, Chinese American Vincent Chin was beaten to death by two Caucasian males in Highland Park, Michigan. The men, Ronald Ebens and his stepson Michael Nitz, were two autoworkers, who blamed the Japanese (and mistakenly, Chin) for loss of jobs in the U.S. auto industry. The two men were both charged with second-degree murder and later pleaded guilty to manslaughter, receiving a sentence of three years probation and a \$3,000 fine. Federal civil rights cases were filed against the two defendants and one was found guilty. The case was then appealed, and upon retrial of the federal civil rights case, a different jury acquitted Mr. Ebens. Thus, in the end, neither man ever served a jail sentence for murdering Chin.

The initial probate and fine sentence shocked APAs nationwide. As a result, a group of APAs were motivated to form American Citizens for Justice (ACJ), a pan-Asian American activist group that demanded federal charges against the two men. According to APA advocates, it was the first time that Asian Pacific Americans crossed ethnic and socioeconomic lines to represent and fight as a united group of Asian Pacific Americans. Helen Zia, co-founder of ACJ and community activist quotes, "For the first time, we considered ourselves as a race, a minority race in America that faced discrimination and had to fight for our civil rights. The Vincent Chin case marked the beginning of the emergence of Asian Pacific Americans as a self-defined American racial group." His death remains a turning point for APAs; it served as a wake up call to establish the need to effectively fight for justice.

Affirmative Action

A statewide ballot proposal could, if passed, have negative ramifications for the civil rights climate in Michigan. The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) proposes to amend the Michigan Constitution in order to prohibit state and local government from discriminating against or granting preferential treatment to any individual/group based on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin. This could drastically alter affirmative action in public employment, public education, including the state itself, any city, county, any public college, university, or community college, school district, or other political subdivision or governmental instrumentality of or within the State of Michigan. The initiative, if codified, would likely be detrimental for all racial ethnic minority groups and women in Michigan, including APAs. On March 30, 2006 Michigan Supreme Court ruled against reviewing the MCRI opposition appeal. It will therefore be on the ballot in the November 2006 election.

Voting Rights Act

Another key issue affecting APAs is voting rights. Among the provisions of the Voting Right Act, the Act contains special enforcement provisions targeting areas of the country where Congress believes the potential for discrimination is most likely to occur. It is considered one of the most effective civil rights laws passed by Congress.

The principle behind the Voting Rights Act is simple, to eliminate discrimination in voting. Nonetheless, equal opportunity in voting still does not exist in many places. Discrimination on the basis of race still denies many APAs their basic democratic rights. It is crucial that everyone in our democracy have the right to vote. Yet, having that right legally is meaningless if certain groups of people, such as those with limited English proficiency, are unable to accurately cast their ballot at the polls. Language assistance is needed in certain jurisdictions with concentrated populations of limited English proficient voters. APAs have suffered systematic exclusion from the political process and it has taken a series of reforms, including repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, and passage of amendments strengthening the Voting Rights Act, to fully extend to APAs.

In 1975, the act was expanded to include protections for language minorities in order to implement new tools to ensure fairness in the voting process. Although the act has been amended three times, minority voters have continued to face discrimination since the Voting Rights Act was last reauthorized in 1982. Section 203 was added to the Voting Rights Act in 1975 and requires certain jurisdictions in the nation to make language assistance available at polling locations for citizens with limited English proficiency. According to the section, registration and voting materials for all elections must be provided in the minority language as well as in English. Oral translation during all phases of the voting process, from voter registration clerks to poll workers, also is required. These provisions currently impact some 466 local jurisdictions across 31 states, Michigan being one of them.

There has been sufficient evidence where (1) limited English proficient APA voters were treated disrespectfully, (2) refusal to permit limited English proficient APA voters to be assisted by an assistor of their choice, improperly influencing, coercing, or ignoring the ballot choices of limited English proficient APA voters, (3) failure to make available bilingual personnel to provide effective assistance and information needed by minority language voters, and (4) refusal or failure to provide provisional ballots to limited English proficient APA voters.

In 2007, three crucial sections of the Voting Rights Act will expire unless Congress votes to reauthorize them. The sections include: Section 5, requiring jurisdictions with sufficient evidence of discrimination in voting to get federal approval of any new voting practices or procedures; Section 203, ensuring that voters with limited English proficiency get the assistance they need at the polls; and Sections 6-9, authorizing the Attorney General to appoint federal election observers where there is significant histories of attempts to intimidate minority voters.

Assumptions that underlie the recommendations

Under-representation

APAs remain under-represented in all levels of government, politics, judicial system, political appointments and in the diversity of staffs of elected officials in Michigan. Moreover, the glass ceiling phenomenon, anti-Asian violence, and housing discrimination remain issues for the APA community in Michigan.

Linguistic accessibility

Some segments of the APA population, such as the elderly and those who are not proficient in English, are not familiar enough with the way sectors of the government operate, especially when dealing with voting rights. There are avenues for remedy, since language assistance to be implemented as law by Section 203 of the Voters Rights of 1965 is not unreasonably costly. According to a study done by the Government Accounting Office, when implemented properly, language assistance accounts only for a small fraction of total election costs. Reauthorization of specific provisions of the act will help to ensure that every APA receives the assistance they need to properly cast their vote at the polls.

Political awareness

Promoting political awareness and educating the APA community about politics will benefit the APA community by: eliminating the stigma/perception that APAs are “model minority” and “perpetual foreigners,” i.e., the perception that APAs are all accepted in the mainstream, face less discrimination and hate crime, and that all APAs have upward mobility. Increased political awareness will facilitate coalition building with other ethnic communities, increase civic and political involvement, provide more boardroom involvement and unite APA groups.

Benefits

The initiative will benefit the mainstream community by: (1) establishing more inclusion and acceptance, forming eventual desegregation with less conflict, and (2) creating a more diverse workforce/culture for business innovations and thus uniting all ethnic groups.

Stakeholders, such as human resources professionals, will have a better understanding of APA employees resulting in a better work environment, leading to increasing production and achievements. A more in-depth understanding of civil rights laws regarding APAs, and a better understanding of APA work ethics and cultural norms will, in turn, apply equal opportunities for all. As a result, more of a diverse workforce will be created, which will be better suited for global competition.

APA community will have more knowledge of our civil rights and the availability of legal tools to us, which will result in empowerment of the APA community. Printed documents that are translated in various Asian languages will help with language barriers in the voting process.

The community at large will gain more knowledge about each APA subgroup, whose culture may otherwise be less well known. For providing meaningful outreach to the APA community, it is important to know that there are vast differences among APAs based on ethnicity, history, political climate of our country of origin, and therefore our needs may differ based on these differences.

Teachers, school administrators, and other education professionals will have more awareness of their diverse student bodies, resulting in a much richer educational experience for all. In turn, students will have better preparation for leadership in the workforce.

For Michigan citizens, a more diverse educational system leads to better understanding and cohesiveness of all ethnic groups, resulting in less hate crimes against minorities, especially APAs.

Recommended action steps

What and Who:

- Create workshops for APAs and other stakeholders
- Provide multi-lingual Civil Rights brochures/manuals that advertise the hotline and web link
- Provide availability of a full time APA Civil Rights Liaison
- Build coalitions with other APA groups and other ethnic groups.
- Develop a Pan-Asian organization that will yield influence
- Increase the number of APA civil servants
- Elect/Appoint politicians who will support laws that recognize the APA community and APA issues
- Register to vote and encourage/educate APAs in the community to vote

When:

- Determine date(s) for specific projects after the Governor's approval

Identification of the stakeholders

- APA Communities
- Civil rights Organizations/Commissions
- Civil rights attorneys
- Non-profit organizations
- Politicians
- Human resources professionals (both in the private and public sectors)
- Schools and universities: teachers, administrators, and para-professionals
- Michigan citizens

B. Immigration Initiative

To educate employers and prospective/current APA workers in Michigan on basic immigration laws.

Overview of the problem

Between 1990 and 2000, Michigan experienced a 71.3% growth in its APA population. APAs now make up over 2% of Michigan's population, with over 208,000 APAs identifying Michigan as their home. While 5% of Michigan's total population is foreign born, 67% of Michigan's APA population was born outside of the United States. Foreign-born APAs in Michigan have a 41% naturalization rate, comparable to the overall naturalization rate of 46% of all foreign-born individuals in Michigan. These statistics highlight the importance of immigration to the APA community.

With increasing numbers of Asian Pacific Americans taking residence in Michigan, APAs will continue to play a vital role in contributing to the state's economy. Furthermore, the young median age of the APA population (28.7 years) translates into higher number of APAs in the workforce or higher education.

Because many APAs are first generation citizens, they often face barriers in navigating the system in regards to immigration, education, and employment. One participant in an APA Town Hall meeting illustrated this point by stating, "As a first generation immigrant, we usually do not automatically know all the rights, laws, and other common rules as other people who grow up in this country." To address these issues, the ACAPAA Immigration Initiative seeks to develop a program to educate Michigan employers and current/prospective APA immigrant workers on their rights and obligations under current immigration laws. This program would include education for both parties on work visas, permanent residency options, and compliance requirements. Through this education program, the ACAPAA Immigration Initiative would also seek to encourage prospective employers to invest in Michigan's economy and APA immigrant workers.

History and background

In the wake of the 9/11 tragedy and the introduction of House of Representative Bill H.R. 4437, it is clear that immigration is in the national spotlight once again. Unfortunately, the growing anti-immigration sentiment in the U.S. has fueled an increasing number of hate crimes and discrimination against APAs. As a state with border crossings into Canada, Michigan has a crucial role in ensuring that all people have fair and equal treatment at checkpoints both entering and leaving the U.S.

Many Michigan employers and current/prospective APA immigrant workers are not familiar enough with the immigration laws to know their rights, obligations and options. Promoting awareness and education of immigration laws will result in the creation of more jobs for APA immigrant workers, a more supportive environment for APA workers, and a stronger economy for Michigan. Furthermore, awareness and education of immigration laws will result in greater compliance by Michigan employers and fewer deportations of APA immigrant workers.

Benefits

Many stakeholders stand to gain from better understanding and support of APA immigrants in Michigan. As mentioned above, employers that currently employ or intend to employ APA immigrant workers in Michigan and APA immigrant workers themselves can both benefit from education regarding immigration laws. Employers will be able to recruit eligible workers, keep the employees they need, improve compliance with the law, and improve their public image. In turn, workers will be more active and productive participants in society when they are more educated about their rights and obligations. They will also benefit from being able to work and stay in the U.S. legally. As many immigrants are self-employed, an education initiative on immigration and immigrants' rights and obligations will also help them avoid potential pitfalls with the law. With increased access to immigration assistance, APA immigrants will be more effectively serviced in achieving legalized status, obtaining legal work authorization, and earning their naturalization. Most importantly, empowering immigrants can help them better represent themselves, allowing them to take leadership roles in government, business, and the larger community.

In addition to employers and workers benefiting from more resources on immigration, non-profit organizations can also benefit from greater awareness of APA immigrants and APA immigrant issues. With better education, these organizations can better serve APA immigrants. They can also diversify their services and workforce, training and employing more APAs as service providers.

Finally, all Michigan citizens stand to gain from better understanding of APAs and the APA immigrant community. A better and more accurate public perception of APA immigrants will lead to a more diverse workforce and community and contribute to a stronger Michigan economy. Notably, the initiative will also support and work toward the Governor's vision of "One Michigan," where all Michigan residents will live and work together as equals. When APA immigrants are better educated regarding their rights and obligations in society, they will be more empowered to participate as equal participants in the Michigan economy and society.

Recommended Actions:

- **Development and implementation of an educational seminar program for Michigan employers and current/prospective APA immigrant workers on immigration laws**
 1. Curriculum for this program would be created by the Immigration Committee within the ACAPAA
 2. Curricular content of this program would include, but not be limited to the rights and obligations of both the employers and immigrant workers, work visas, and permanent residency options
 3. Immigration attorneys would be recruited to teach at these seminars
 4. Marketing program
 5. This would publicize the seminar program to both workers and employers and also point the public to immigration resources on the ACAPAA website
 6. Implementation of the program would be done in conjunction with ACAPAA, MDCR, APA organizations, and other non-profit and community organizations with interest in immigration issues
 7. MDCR would play a major role in the implementation of the program by providing administrative support (printing and distribution of seminar materials), helping register participants at seminars, assisting with marketing (printing,

distribution of flyers, mailings, printing and distribution of seminar materials), and providing space to hold the initial seminars in Lansing, MI

8. The initial pilot seminars would be made available free of charge to the public; however, we envision that a nominal fee be charged to employers in the future

- **Compilation of a list of available resources for immigration information and pro bono immigration assistance**

1. This list would be posted on the ACAPAA website, and include information about the seminars discussed above

- **Designation of a formal liaison in the Governor's Office to serve as the contact person with the ACAPAA Immigration Initiative**

1. This would ensure that timely communication occurred and improve follow-up and accountability within both the initiative and MDCR

The above recommendations for the Immigration Initiative will accomplish the desired outcomes because the proposed program will serve to broaden awareness of immigration laws and create greater access to immigration assistance. In addition, the offered action steps are reasonable and feasible in light of available or known resources at this time.

The current timeline for curriculum development includes having the curriculum completed by September 1, 2006. The pilot seminar would be completed by the end of 2006, assuming approval and support of this initiative by the Governor and support from MDCR.

C. Health Initiative

To create an APA health initiative that includes equal access to the health care system.

Overview of the problem

The overarching goal of the ACAPAA Health Initiative is to address health care disparities among the APA population in Michigan. Disparities have been documented regarding unequal access to screening, diagnosis, and medical treatment, resulting in poorer health care outcomes in medically underprivileged populations. Some startling health statistics specific to the APA community include:

- APAs suffer disproportionately higher rates from certain types of cancer (including cervical cancer) and often present later in the disease course due to lack of education and access to screening. They also suffer from higher rates of diabetes, tuberculosis, and hepatitis B.
- APAs lag behind in cancer screening rates. This difference cannot be solely explained by health care access or socioeconomic indicators alone, however. A study analyzing National Health Interview Survey data from 1993-1994 found that breast cancer screening rates for APAs were well below established national objectives and guidelines (10). The study also indicated that even with higher income, more education, and better insurance coverage, APA women and their subgroups still have lower rates of both cervical and breast cancer screening.
- The high rate of smokers is a serious concern among adults in the APA community.

History and background

In the Michigan health care system, lack of health care access among APAs has been identified as the major obstacle to addressing health disparities in the APA community. Surveys and individual testimony from ACAPAA Town Hall Meetings in early 2006 identified lack of access as a prevalent problem. In addition, research and policy documents exist which discuss substandard access for APAs, including the Institute of Medicine's Commission to End Health Care Disparities, the 2001 White House Initiative on APAs, and the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Care Forum documents.

Many factors contribute to decreased health care access. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of data collection and analysis on health indicators among APAs
 1. Absence of data to reference the health status of the APA population in Healthy People 2010
 2. Least amount of baseline data on APAs in Healthy People 2000 compared to other racial and ethnic groups
 3. Fewest objectives compared to other ethnic groups in Healthy People 2000
 4. APAs not discussed within topic of breast cancer screening among racial/ethnic minorities
 5. Lack of data collected at statewide level – Michigan Department of Community Health collects data on Caucasians, African Americans, and other groups, but there is a dearth of data being collected on APAs
 6. Lack of inclusion in clinical trials

- Language barriers
 1. Many APAs have limited English proficiency and cannot communicate with health care providers or insurance carriers. They are dependent on family members or staff for assistance with translation and often do not access the services they need. Confidentiality may also be compromised when trained interpreters are not readily available. In these cases, APAs may choose not to access care at all because they do not want sensitive health information being shared with others in their family.

- Lack of basic medical knowledge
 1. Different belief systems versus biomedical model of health
 2. Less health education from countries of origin
 3. No knowledge about screening
 4. How and when to seek help from health care providers

- Lack of insurance
 1. Although many APAs are working, they are often self-employed or work in a family business and cannot afford health insurance
 2. Immigrants often do not understand the health care system and do not know where to go for health care. Although Medicaid and/or Medicare are often options for some APAs, language barriers and lack of understanding on how to apply are barriers to accessing insurance.

- Mental health care
 1. Suicide statistics among elderly Asian Americans
 2. Depression
 3. Translation/LEP
 4. PTSD in immigrants from war, trauma, etc.

- Cultural biases hindering health seeking behaviors
 1. Screening
 2. Cancer as death sentence

Recommended Action Steps

ACAPAA strongly encourages the Department of Community Health (MDCH) to take the lead on data collection and analysis of health indicators in APA population.

Further, support the use of interpretation services where community need exists by enlisting the services of volunteers. Action items are as follows:

- Department of Community Health (DCH), ACAPAA and APA organizations coordinate their efforts to educate APA population about the health care resources available to them through health fairs and community outreach programs. Make BCBSM's "Help with Health Care" booklets (and other health care resources pertaining to access) available to APA organizations for distribution to their members.

- Educate health care providers on the importance of cultural sensitivity.
- Work with lawmakers to support and/or introduce legislation that will lead to elimination of racial and ethnic disparities in health care.

Assumptions that underlie the above recommendations

Addressing the health care needs of the APA community in Michigan makes Michigan a healthier and more progressive state, thereby keeping with the Surgeon General's goal of achieving a Healthy Michigan 2010.

A systematic collection of data on the APA population is needed in order to show the health care disparities between Caucasians and APAs. No such data can be found at this point.

Early intervention through preventive care and screening of diseases prevalent in the APA community, i.e., cervical cancer, diabetes, tuberculosis, and Hepatitis B, hypertension and heart diseases can reduce the cost of health care for the APA population in Michigan. It is well known that people without health insurance and those who do not understand the value of preventive care tend to use the emergency room as their primary form of healthcare, thus contributing to a more costly health care.

Culturally sensitive health care as well as culturally competent health care is being advocated in recent health care literature. A literature search names many sources on this topic.

Better education through culturally sensitive means can also promote better access for health care professionals to culturally sensitive health matters such as clinical trials and bone marrow donations.

Change through education and training is urgently needed. The concept of culturally sensitive/competent care needs to be introduced in the curricula for all health care professionals.

At the State level, legislation/policy needs to be introduced to endorse the concept of the culturally sensitive/competent health care workers. Health care workers need to be supported by a culturally sensitive health care system in order to serve a population of diverse healthcare recipients.

Identification of the stakeholders

- APA Communities and Organizations
- Healthcare Professionals
- Health Professional Organizations
- Third party health care payers
- Medical Schools
- Schools of Nursing
- Allied Health Educational Institutions

Evaluation

Outcomes that will assist in evaluating the positive achievement of the Health recommendations will be reflected in the Michigan Healthy People 2010 as shown by:

1. An improved awareness by the general Health Care community of the present lack of data within the Michigan Healthy People 2010 goal on Eliminating Health Disparities. It should be noted that higher percentage of Asian Americans suffer disproportionately from certain types of cancer (cervical cancer) and chronic illnesses such as diabetes, TB and hepatitis B, and these facts must be included in the document Michigan Healthy People 2010.
2. Reduction in the health care disparities between the White and the APA population as shown in the next published version of the Michigan Healthy People 2010 in APA statistics related to diseases such as: cancer, heart diseases, and diabetes.

References:

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D. Education I: APA Content in K – 12 Curriculum

To create strategies for inclusion of Asian Pacific American content into Michigan's K-12 curriculum.

Overview of the problem

The Asian Pacific American community is the second fastest growing population segment in southeastern Michigan. Yet as Michigan's population increases in diversity, the content of public education has not kept pace in preparing citizens to leverage civic engagement in a diverse society toward Michigan's socioeconomic prosperity. A cursory review of the Michigan Curriculum Standards by members of the ACAAPA who work in the education section has found extremely little opportunity for increasing students' awareness of different communities that now make up Michigan – and this includes the descendants of indigenous residents as well as communities who have taken root since the late 20th century.

Diversifying the K-12 curriculum benefits the statewide Michigan population. It prepares Michigan's high school graduates to engage with diverse student bodies on college campuses, and our diverse society generally. It also enhances professional development opportunities for K-12 educators, both in terms of content acquisition, and also in preparing teachers to educate our diverse student population. Finally, Michigan residents statewide benefit from the increased capacity of its youth to productively transform intra-community and intercultural interactions.

History and background

This initiative focuses attention squarely on the critical need to distinguish between Asian and Asian Pacific American. Whereas Asian studies focuses on the history and culture of the countries that make up Asia and the people who live there, Asian Pacific American studies focuses on the historical experiences and contemporary social conditions of people of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage living in the United States. Focusing study on Asia is not equivalent to studying Asian Pacific Americans in the United States. Studying about life in Asia is not equivalent to studying about the lives of Asian Pacific Americans and the transformation of their cultural heritage traditions in the United States, and the emergence of new cultural formations out of the American experience.

A focus on Asian Pacific American studies is one that:

- Focuses on the history of APAs in the U.S., by documenting when and how they entered, and what their experiences have been in the United States
- Promotes awareness of the contributions of APAs to U.S. history, culture, and thought
- Advocates for just and equitable integration of APAs into American society and culture

In 2002, the Michigan Commission on Asia in the Schools reported that “little is taught about Asia—a region home to over half of the world's population, the largest democracy, and the fastest-growing economies.” The report concluded that “our students must learn more about Asia and world regions to be prepared to work, live, and lead in the future; Michigan's future economy depends on it, and our children deserve it.”⁵

⁵ Report and Recommendations of the Michigan Commission on Asia in the Schools, 2002, pp. 4-5.

While that report offers strong substantiation for curricular inclusion of content on Asia, there are equally compelling reasons for curricular inclusion of content about Asian Pacific Americans. How have systemic social dynamics marginalized Asian Pacific American peoples as "perpetual foreigners," despite multiple generations of residence in the United States? How do stereotypes such as "model minority" create barriers to success for Asian Pacific Americans? What conditions allow for the perpetuation of discrimination, violence and hate crimes against Asian Pacific Americans?

Furthermore, the rubric "Asian Pacific American" includes communities of Pacific Islander origins and heritage. While Pacific Islanders are statistically a micro-population in the U.S., the terms of their historical incorporation into the United States offer pedagogical opportunities of comparison and contrast with the study of Asia and Asians, Native Americans, and other communities of color in the United States.

Assumptions that underlie the recommendations

- APA content empowers disaffected at-risk APA students
- APAs are better understood within non-APA communities
- APAs are better educated about APA history and heritage
- APAs have increased APA visibility in larger community
- APA content increases self-esteem and identity of APAs

Recommended action steps

- Review Michigan Curriculum framework for appropriate APA content: To be done by Department of Education; State Board of Education
- Participate in Michigan Curriculum framework review: by ACAAPA
- Participate in professional development review committee at Michigan Department of education: by ACAAPA
- Develop incentives for prospective teachers in APA languages: to be done by MDE/Governor
- Collect/develop and distribute appropriate course/subject/supplemental instruction material: to be done by MDE and APA community
- Appoint a person in MDE to review report and work with ACAAPA on adoption and implementation: to be done by Governor and MDE

Professional development is directly related to K-12 educators, but teacher preparation programs at higher education institutions certainly fall into the same course areas. Our education issues are a continuum: from (1) high school/community college students who are potential future teachers, to (2) teacher preparation candidates to (3) new teachers who need mentors (by state law), to (4) veteran teachers who also need ongoing professional development to be "highly qualified" teachers, sensitive to diversity in our global market.

- Explore how to deploy content expertise in APA studies presently on UM and MSU faculties, to train K-12 teachers (social studies and language arts) in APA content (professional development)
- Develop curriculum materials appropriate to the different grade levels and disseminate to Michigan schools
- Develop teacher training in APA content
- Work with university student groups to bring greater awareness to university campuses

- Locate those in the education community familiar with APA issues and work on developing the above steps

Evaluation of Outcomes

- Expand APA content in K-12 curriculum for Michigan schools
- Add evaluation and assessment of diversity outcomes in K-12 curriculum
- Increase number of teachers who are qualified to teach APA subjects

Resources

There are numerous scholars with works published on APA history and related issues as well as a number of websites dedicated to issues of concern to the APA community. A coalition of individuals including ACAPAA members, K-12 educators, and college faculty and staff can a) put together a bibliography of books and web pages on APA history and issues, and (b) use our collective resources and knowledge developing a curriculum to propose to the schools.

Michigan Curriculum Framework

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MichiganCurriculumFramework_8172_7.pdf

Michigan DOE: K-12 Curriculum and Standards Page

<http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-28753---,00.html>

Michigan Commission on Asia in the Schools

<http://www.internationale.org/publications/Michigan.AsiaInTheSchools.pdf>

Asia for Kids

<http://www.afk.com:16080/resources/>

Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies at University of Michigan

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/ac/apia>

Asian Pacific American Studies at Michigan State University

<http://www.msu.edu/~apaspec>

University-level faculty expertise on Asian Pacific American Affairs in Michigan

University of Michigan:

Philip Akutsu, Edward Chang, Anthony Chen, Vicente Diaz, Gilbert Gee
 Scott Kurashige, Joseph Lam, Emily Lawsin, Ram Mahalingam, Susan Najita
 Damon Salesa, Sarita See, Margaret Shih, Michael Spencer
 Amy Stillman, Director, Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies

Michigan State University:

Andrea Louie, Director, Asian Pacific American Studies
 Sheng-mei Ma, Anna Pegler-Gordon

Wayne State University, East and Near Asia Studies Department:

<http://www.clas.wayne.edu/neas/>

Frank Wu, Dean, School of Law

E. Education Initiative II: Governance and Professional Development

To promote participation of the Asian Pacific Americans (APA) leadership in educational governance and (educator) professional development.

History

K-16 education is an essential public institution with the unique role of preparing each successive generation for meaningful participation in today's world. Michigan's success and the success of our young people are dependent on how we prepare our youth to meet the new demands of the 21st Century. In order to meet these challenges, Michigan must work to ensure that Asian Pacific Americans enjoy full participation at all levels of educational governance in K-16 and must work to ensure that Asian Pacific American (APA) content within the Michigan Curriculum Framework is vigorously supported through meaningful teacher preparation programs and quality on-going professional development opportunities.

Teacher preparation and professional development

The Michigan Commission on Asia in the Schools convened in 2002 with the concern that Michigan students know far too little about the world in which we live. The Commission reported the findings as follows:

- Michigan high school graduates know little about Asia and its languages
- Michigan is home to premier scholars, language experts and research centers on Asia at its major universities, yet Michigan schools do not benefit from their resources
- Without future employees with international knowledge, language expertise, and an understanding of foreign affairs, Michigan businesses will be less competitive and our nation less effective
- Teachers lack preparation and professional development opportunities in Asian-related subjects
- New web-based technologies are now available to network and train educators and expose students to Asian languages, cultures, and subject matter

Governance

Anecdotal evidence suggests that APA participation in educational governance has lagged the recent growth in APA population in Michigan. There is very little APA representation in governance and administration in K-12 and higher education institutions within Michigan. APA faculty in Michigan may be well represented in some disciplines at some institutions. However, these faculty members may not achieve tenured status as readily as others. In other disciplines, APA faculty members are sorely under-represented.

Across Michigan there are very few APA members on school district Boards of Education and other education policy-making bodies.

Recommended Action Steps:

Governance in Education

- Michigan should examine the current levels of participation of APAs in K-16 educational administration and governance, including school principals, district superintendents, Board of Education members and university administrators.
- Michigan should develop and support a continuum of opportunities for appropriate leadership, mentoring and recruitment programs that encourage participation of APAs in K-16 educational administration and governance.

Teacher Preparation

- Michigan teacher preparation programs at state colleges and universities should prepare future teachers to teach Asian Pacific American (APA) courses and diversity-related issues.
- Michigan should develop and encourage support for quality teacher preparation programs in Michigan universities to enhance the ability of future teachers to teach APA courses and diversity-related issues.
- Michigan should develop and encourage effective mentoring programs to encourage APA students to consider becoming educators—teachers or administrators—as role models for future APA youth.

Professional Development for Educators

- Michigan should assess the current nature of professional development opportunities in the areas of Asian studies, and Asian Pacific American studies that are available to Michigan K-12 educators.
- Michigan should develop and encourage support for a continuum of appropriate professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers to enhance the ability of current teachers to teach Asia, and Asian Pacific American courses and diversity-related issues.
- Michigan should recognize and fully support the Professional Development Plan of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), so all Michigan educators will have equal access to quality ongoing professional learning opportunities from teacher preparation throughout their professional careers. Such professional learning opportunities should encourage Michigan educators to:
 1. Promote cross-cultural awareness by honoring and valuing individual differences and supporting the strengths of all students and colleagues
 2. Ensure that instruction reflects the realities and diversity of the world
 3. Promote an understanding of global and international perspectives
 4. Promote an understanding of and respect for individual differences, including those of culture, race, gender, religion, and ethnicity
 5. Promote understanding and respect for differing points in view
 6. Promote understanding of the similarities within our culture and their importance to the fabric of American society
 7. Provide models for collaboration, change, problem solving and conflict resolution
 8. Develop learner-centered environments that meet diverse needs of learners

9. Create and participate in educator learning communities that stimulate, nurture, and support diverse needs of faculty and staff
10. Provide role models for treating others with respect, dignity, and sensitivity to diversity

Evaluation

Assessment of these recommended action steps will require time and ongoing observation to measure changes in student and educator teaching and learning. Such change will be seen in improved MEAP scores in targeted curriculum areas of social studies/language arts and increased educator attendance in professional development activities involving diversity issues.

Increased professional learning opportunities as recommended will impact the varieties of courses offered by school districts and universities. APA participation on school boards and administrative roles will increase as mentors and supporters encourage APAs to make their voices heard.

Resources

A National Plan for Improving Professional Development, National Staff Development Council, 2000.

Powerful Models of Professional Development, NSDC's Summer Issue, Staff Development Journal, 1999.

Professional Development: Learning from the Best, A Toolkit for Schools and Districts Based on Professional Development Award Winners, North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999.

Promising Practices: New Ways to Improve Teacher Quality, U.S. Department of Education, September, 1998.

Revisiting Professional Development: What Learner-Centered Professional Development Looks Like, National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching, 2000.

Creating a Teacher Mentoring Program, National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE), Washington DC, 1999.

Engaging Public Support for Teachers Professional Development, National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE), Washington DC, 2000.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Governor's Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs is prepared to lead and collaborate with various leaders to bring the APA community to a position of strength, acceptance, and full participation. With strengthened empowerment of the community, Asian Pacific Americans will be that much more valuable to the entire region.

This document details the priority issues facing the Asian Pacific Americans in Michigan. It presents our concerns as well as solutions as initiatives. This important document has been created to help realize the Governor's vision of "One Michigan" in which all Michigan citizens participate fully in the rich fabric of Michigan life.

Asian Pacific Americans are here to help reshape the Michigan economy and make our contribution. Asian Pacific Americans are often seen as people of color who do not face prejudice and discrimination, a "Model Minority" with no needs or concerns. This is untrue. Asian Pacific Americans in Michigan experience prejudice, disparate treatment, and discrimination.

This document is meant to give voice to the APA community. The APA community uses this opportunity to further its causes and offers the valuable resources and assets of this rich and diverse community.