



CALIFORNIA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 14, 2015

Contact: Andrew Medina
(916) 319-3686

API Legislative Caucus Statement Responding to AB 176 Veto

(Sacramento, CA) - Assemblymember Das Williams (D-Carpinteria) and Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Oakland), chair and parliamentarian, respectively, of the Asian & Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus, issued the following statement after Governor Brown vetoed Assemblymember Bonta's AB 176 to uncover social, economic, and educational disparities within the Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) community.

AB 176 would have required the State Department of Managed Care and the California Community Colleges, California State University, and the University of California to use specified categories for each major APIA group when they collect certain categories of demographic data. Some of the data revealed by the bill would include information on graduation rates, enrollment and admission for higher education, rates for major diseases, and leading causes of death per demographic. AB 176 is a major API Legislative Caucus priority bill.

Assemblymember Das Williams Statement:

"Data disaggregation has been a priority for the API Legislative Caucus since its inception in 2001. Governor Jerry Brown laid the foundation for bills like AB 176 when he signed former-Assemblymember Mike Eng's AB 1088, a bill requiring two state agencies to collect and provide disaggregated data for APIA subgroups, in 2011.

AB 176 was an elegant fix to a historically complex problem. The lack of disaggregated data makes people come up with assumptions that are already divisive. By relying on the aggregate data of the APIA community, California misses the needs of growing ethnic subpopulations. Looking at the recent Campaign for College Opportunity report on APIAs, we find that attainment of a Bachelor's degree for Asian Americans is 49%; however, when you disaggregate the data, we find that attainment for Laotians is 10%, Samoan is 12%, and Hmong is 13%. Disaggregating data provides a clearer picture of what APIA communities require assistance. Real information will make the situation less divisive than it already is.

The Campaign for College Opportunity report further demonstrates, especially with respect to higher education, just how important comprehensive and reliable data is to making effective policy decisions for all members of the APIA community. The API Legislative Caucus is committed to continuing this important effort and will be reintroducing the bill as one of our first priorities in the upcoming legislative session."

Assemblymember Rob Bonta Statement:

"I strongly disagree with the Governor's statement that the bill was divisive. AB 176 measures currently existing disparities among APIA communities. The best way we can serve APIAs is to get information that accurately identifies where we are falling short.

Take me as an example of how this works. With respect to representation in the California State Legislature, if you look at the APIA population as one group, there have been 35 APIAs who have served in the California State Legislature. However, once you break down the data, you will learn that it wasn't until my election in

2012, that a Filipino American was elected to the California State Legislature. It's not until you dig deeper, and disaggregate the data by subgroup that you learn there has never been a Filipino representative---not for 165 years.

That's part of why it's so important to me to give a voice not only to my own Filipino community, but to all APIA subgroups who face challenges that are distinct from the collective population. While many APIA groups share some of the same challenges, such as language access issues, racial discrimination, and obstacles arising from immigration, each of our diverse communities have different social, economic and educational outcomes that need to be addressed appropriately.

AB 176 would have given the state a better understanding of the needs of each of these APIA subgroups, provide effective and targeted solutions, and improve service delivery within the APIA community."

Several members of the API Legislative Caucus will be joining the Commission on APIA Affairs and various community based organizations for a press conference on Wednesday, October 14, 2015, at 1:30 pm located in the Chinese for Affirmative Action Community Room at 17 Walter U. Lum Place, San Francisco, CA 94108 to discuss the recently released Campaign for College Opportunity report, *The State of Higher Education in California: Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander*. The report, by the Campaign for College Opportunity, examines how California's 6.3 million Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders are faring in higher education, indicating great disparities in access and success across ethnic subgroups.

Visit [the State of Higher Education in California](#) to read the findings of the report.

Visit [AB 176](#) to read the full text of the bill.

The API Legislative Caucus was established in 2001 with the mission of representing and advocating for the interests of the diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities throughout California. Additionally, the Caucus seeks to increase Asian Pacific Islander participation and representation in all levels of government.

###