

SUPPORT AB 2420 (LIEU): ACCURATE DATA ON ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Current data collection methods preclude an accurate understanding of the needs of many new and emerging Asian Pacific American (APA) communities. Accurate demographic data is critical in developing effective policies that respond to the needs of California's residents. Given the incredible diversity of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), with different cultures, languages, and histories, data that is broken out by specific ethnic groups is critical to having an accurate understanding of how each community is faring.

Asian Pacific Americans are an Incredibly Diverse and Growing Population.

- APAs represent 14% of California's population. From 1990 to 2000, the APA population grew by as much as 52%.
- APAs are now the second largest major racial or ethnic group in four counties and the majority of the population in eight cities across California.
- While APAs are often misrepresented as a homogeneous group, they actually represent dozens of different cultures, languages, and ethnic groups and have a wide range of economic, educational, and social needs.

Only Disaggregated Data Reveals How Each APA Ethnic Group is Truly Faring

- While overall data may show that APAs are doing better than average on certain social indicators, data that is separated out by ethnic group clearly shows that certain communities, especially among Pacific Islander and Southeast Asian ethnic groups, have some of the greatest needs, including some of the highest poverty rates and lowest educational attainment rates in California.
- Similarly, APAs overall have a low mortality rate from homicides, but particular ethnic groups, including Cambodians and Vietnamese have rates that are two to four times greater than average.
- In the health care arena, specific APA ethnic groups are more likely to face certain conditions, a fact that is masked when looking only at overall data for all APAs. For example, Guamanians, Samoans, and Asian Indians have some of the highest death rates for coronary heart disease.

Disaggregated Data for APAs Must Be Expanded

- California law currently requires the state collection of disaggregated data for the following APA ethnic groups: Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Hawaiian, Guamanian, Samoan, Laotian, and Cambodian. However, this list does not include many APA ethnic groups.
- The federal U.S. Census provides data for a more comprehensive list of APA ethnic groups.
- This bill will simply align state data so that it is broken out into the APA ethnic groups that have data reported in the U.S. Census. It will have state agencies collect data for additional APA ethnic groups, including Hmong, Tongan, Thai, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Malaysian, Indonesian, Taiwanese, and Fijian.
- In order to minimize costs, AB 2420 allows for a longer implementation period so that agencies can make any changes to forms, information systems, or data collection procedures as they need to modify these systems for other reasons.