

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Make Sure Asian and Pacific Americans are Counted: Bill to Ensure State Data Reflects Diversity of Asian and Pacific Americans Re-Introduced in State Assembly Today**

SACRAMENTO, CA – Today, AB 295, sponsored by Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality (AACRE) and authored by Assembly Member Ted Lieu, was introduced to ensure state health, education, and employment data more accurately represents the diversity within Asian Pacific American (APA) communities.

Under existing law, California state agencies are required to collect data for 11 APA ethnic groups. AB 295 would require certain state agencies to expand their data collection for additional APA ethnic groups, as currently reported by the federal US Census.

“California is home to one-third of the nation’s APA population--the greatest number in the country,” remarks Gen Fujioka, Acting Executive Director of the Asian Law Caucus. “If the U.S. Census can report federal data to reflect the diversity of APA ethnic groups, then California should as well.”

AB 295 would ensure state agencies governing health and human services, education, employment and civil rights will report data for the Hmong, Tongan, Thai, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Malaysian, Indonesian, Taiwanese, and Fijian communities.

Disaggregating population data helps state agencies to better serve their communities. “Accurate data is critical for developing effective responses to the needs of APAs,” states Stewart Kwoh, Executive Director of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center. “For example, while overall data may show that APAs are faring better than average for certain health conditions, data that is separated out by ethnic group shows that Samoans and Asian Indians have some of the highest death rates for coronary heart disease.”

“Individuals of Asian or Pacific Islander descent are commonly categorized under one homogenous label, which ignores any cultural or linguistic differences they possess,” says Vincent Pan, Executive Director of CAA | Center for Asian American Advocacy. “This masking of differences creates real consequences for how community needs are addressed. We have an opportunity to correct these policy flaws with AB 295, and applaud Assembly Member Ted Lieu for authoring this bill.”

AACRE is a joint partnership between CAA | Center for Asian American Advocacy, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, and Asian Law Caucus, dedicated to bringing a voice for APAs to the state capitol.

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