



Southeast Asia Resource Action Center

Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions H.R. 2616 and S. 2160

WHAT IS THE LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI) SERVING INSTITUTIONS?

U.S. House of Representatives

- Introduced by then Congressman Robert Underwood (Guam) in the 107th Congress on May 22, 2002 as H.R. 4825.
- Introduced by Congressman David Wu (OR) in the 108th Congress on January 8, 2003 as H.R. 333.
- Re-introduced by Congressman David Wu in the 109th Congress on May 24, 2005 as H.R. 2616.
 - ❖ Current Status: H.R. 2616 referred to the House Committee on Education and Workforce, Subcommittee on the 21st Century Competitiveness.

U.S. Senate

- U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer (CA) and Daniel Akaka (HI) introduced the Senate companion bill on December 21, 2005 as S. 2160.
 - ❖ Current Status: S. 2160 referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

WHAT DOES THE LEGISLATION DO?

The Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions, if enacted, would establish a federal designation for Asian American and Pacific Islanders under the Higher Education Act that would provide the U.S. Department of Education with the authority to issue grants of assistance to higher education institutions.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AAPI SERVING INSTITUTIONS?

- Higher education institutions must have a minimum of 10% or more of AAPI undergraduate enrollment;
- Higher education institutions that serve a significant percentage of low-income students and/or a minimum 50% of its degree-seeking students receive need-based assistance under Title IV (Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Work Study, Federal Perkins Loans); or a substantial percentage of students receiving Pell Grants.

WHY IS THE LEGISLATION NECESSARY?

This bill seeks equity by providing increased higher education opportunities for low-income and underserved AAPI students. Under current law, the U.S. Department of Education is authorized to issue grants and assistance to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions. Through these designations, qualifying colleges and universities have been able to expand their capacity to serve minority and low-income minority students.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS LEGISLATION?

Both the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Health and Human Services have extensive partnerships and outreach programs in African American, Hispanic, and Native American communities. Without a similar designation for AAPIs in the Higher Education Act, federal agencies are limited in their ability to address the needs of and outreach to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

This designation is utilized by numerous federal agencies to improve and expand the capacity of institutions of higher education to serve low-income and under-represented AAPIs. Eligible activities include:

- Establishing partnerships with community based organizations serving Asian American and Pacific Islanders;
- Curriculum development and academic instruction;
- Academic tutoring and counseling programs and student support services;
- Establishing community outreach programs that will encourage elementary school and secondary school students to develop the academic skills and the interest to pursue post-secondary education;
- Academic instruction in disciplines in which Asian Americans and Pacific Islander populations are under-represented;
- Conducting research and data collection for Asian American and Pacific Islander populations and sub-populations.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS BILL?

Go to <http://thomas.loc.gov> and search "H.R.2616" or "S.2160" to find a copy of the bill.

HOW CAN I BECOME MORE INVOLVE?

Contact Jenny Yang at (202)-667-4690 or email: jenny@searac.org.

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