

Ms. Soomin Chao
Chair, Instructional Quality Commission
California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Regarding: California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) –AB 331

As a concerned American and supporter of Israel, I am deeply troubled by the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) and truly alarmed that if AB 331 is approved by the California state legislature in the coming days, every high school student in the state will be required to take an ethnic studies course based on the ESMC before graduating. I am aware that many individuals and groups affiliated with the Jewish community have already written to you about the ESMC's shocking omission of information about American Jews and antisemitism, its use of classic antisemitic stereotypes, and its blatant anti-Israel bias. This includes the California Legislative Jewish Caucus, who wrote to you that they "cannot support a curriculum that erases the American Jewish experience, fails to discuss antisemitism, reinforces negative stereotypes about Jews, singles out Israel for criticism and would institutionalize the teaching of antisemitic stereotypes in our public schools."

I am writing to you because I believe these concerns highlight a much deeper and graver problem, namely, the fact that an educational curriculum can be hijacked by those pushing a political and hateful agenda. If not addressed, this problem threatens to undermine not only the current effort to develop an ethnic studies model curriculum, but all other curricular efforts undertaken by the Department of Education. In order to prevent such abuse and the extremely harmful consequences that will ensue from it, I believe safeguards *must* be put in place before *any* state-mandated curriculum is adopted for use in California classrooms.

I strongly urge you, as well as the Board of Education officials and state legislators to immediately address this consequential problem by establishing safeguards for ensuring that all state-sponsored curricula and other instructional materials may *never* be created or used as tools of political indoctrination that promote hatred and incite harm against any race, religion, group or individual.

Respectfully,

