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July 29, 2019

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

To Chairwoman Chao and Members of the Instructional Quality Commission:

We write as Members of the California Legislative Jewish Caucus to share our deep concerns with the current draft of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). The ESMC is inaccurate and misleading in several critical respects and is drafted in a manner that reflects an anti-Jewish bias. For this reason, we are strongly opposed to the ESMC moving forward without significant revisions.

As elected representatives and members of California's diverse Jewish community, we have consistently prioritized efforts to promote inclusion and have strongly supported efforts to ensure that California students understand our state's complicated history and rich diversity. However, we 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. We respectfully request that the IQC address the matters outlined below.

The Draft Curriculum Effectively Erases the American Jewish Experience

Despite the significant contributions of Jews to California's history, politics, culture, and government—and our community's longstanding struggle against hatred and discrimination—the ESMC effectively erases the American Jewish experience. Indeed, notwithstanding widespread agreement that Judaism is a form of identity that is broader than religion. I and the inclusion of religion in sample courses for African American, Native American, Latin American, and Arao American Studies.² Jews are essentially excluded from the ESMC. We have been advised that

E.g., Carolyn Chen, Sustaining Faith Traditions: Race. Ethnicity and Religion among the Latino and Asian American Second Generation (New York: NYU 2012) at 17: "UC Berkeley Department of Ethnic Studies Mission," http://ethnicstudies.berkeley.edu/about/mission. last accessed July 25, 2019.

² California State Department of Education. Drate 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Chapter 2: Sample Course Models, at 48, 200, 233-4, 236 (2019) [hereinatter ESMC Chapter 2] available at https://www.ede.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmcpubliccomment asp.