From: Maneck Bhujwala

Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2019 5:07 PM

To: IQC

Subject: Request to include information about Zoroastrians in the new curriculum

Dear Commissioners
California Instructional Quality Commission

I read about the revisions of the Draft Curriculum of Ethnic Studies Program being done by the Department of Education, in the Indian community news weekly, India West issue of August 30, 2019, and I wanted to request for inclusion of information about the Zarathushti (Zoroastrian) community in California.

Followers of the over 4,500 year old monotheistic religion founded by Prophet Zarathushtra (also known as Zoroaster by Greek philosophers like Plato who studied his philosophy) in eastern Iranian lands and which centuries later became the majority religion of three Persian empires (Achemenian, Parthian, and Sasanian) for over a thousand years, migrated to the United States mainly from India, Pakistan and Iran, and settled in several States, including California starting in the 1960s.

I myself am originally from India, and came to California in 1968, after obtaining my Master's degree in Engineering from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, and worked in several large, medium and small high tech companies in Northern and Southern California, including on a NASA project related to the Space Shuttle at Moffet Field.

In 1974 I co-founded the Zoroastrian Association of California in Los Angeles, and in 1980 I co-founded another organization in Northern California, in San Jose, called the Zarathushti Anjuman of Northern California, and served in various positions on their executive committees. In later years, with many Zoroastrians migrating from Iran, other Zoroastrians co-founded the California Zoroastrian Center in the city of Westminster. Another organization was founded in Northern California called the Sacramento Zoroastrian Association. Today, we have places of worship in the cities of Orange, Westminster, Canoga Park Sacramento, with a new one planned in the San Diego area. In my retirement from an engineering career, I serve as a volunteer priest.

I have also been actively involved as a volunteer representing the Zoroastrian community, in several interfaith organizations, including a stint as president of the Greater Huntington Beach Interfaith Council, Board Member of the South Coast Interfaith Council and North American Interfaith Network, Advisory Council of The Guibord Center, and co-chair of the Interfaith Activities Committee of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America. I recently obtained a Master's degree in Interfaith Action from Claremont Lincoln University of Claremont, California.

Kindly advise about the procedure we should follow to enable inclusion of information about our community and religion in the suggested curriculum for education in California schools.

Sincerely, Maneck Bhujwala, M.S.E.E., M.B.A., M.A. Interfaith Action Overseas Director, World Zoroastrian Organization, U.K.