



August 4, 2020

The Honorable Senator Steven Bradford
Chair, Senate Committee on Banking and Financial Institutions
State Capitol, Room 405
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 979 (Holden) – Corporations: board of directors: underrepresented communities-- SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Bradford,

We, the undersigned API community organizations, are pleased to support Assembly Bill 979 which amends the Corporations Code, currently requiring corporations with executive offices in California have a minimum number of female directors on their board, to also include comparable requirements for underrepresented communities.

Since the beginning of recent social unrest, corporations have publicly messaged their support for diversity and Black lives. However, critics have pointed out this public support will not improve corporate diversity unless corporations implement long-term structural changes to remedy obvious inequities.

The most obvious is board representation, where minorities represent 16% of board seats in the Fortune 500 yet are 40% of the U.S. population and 63% of California's.

The Harvard Business Review argues that a diverse board contributes to better decision making, improve company governance, and can respond to market shifts more effectively. These benefits are not restricted to the board of directors; the benefits of greater diversity contribute to the overall health of the company. A cultural shift in the boardroom cultivates an environment that values different perspectives and visibly signals a commitment to more equitably hire, retain, and promote women and minorities.

APIs are well represented in most technical and professional fields and comprise 33% of California's white-collar workforce. However, as with other minorities, APIs are also underrepresented in the board room - only 3.7% of directors in the Fortune 500.



The API community joins with the other underrepresented communities to hope that AB 979 serves as a springboard to address ethnic pay gap, employment and outreach opportunities, board diversification, pipeline creation and upward mobility of diverse technical talent, and retention of that talent through company culture and development.

Sincerely,

Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area

Asian American Unity Alliance (AAUC), President SK Lo

Asian Law Alliance, Richard Konda, Executive Director

Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute (APALI), Michael Chang, Founder

Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), Ken Fong, Chair

Association of Asian American Attorney and CPA Firms., Alexis S. M. Chiu, Esq

Bay Area Asian American General Counsels (BAAAGC) Andrew Kim, John Kuo

Chinatown Community Development Center, San Francisco, CA, Malcolm Yeung, ED

Civic Leadership USA (CLUSA), Anthony Ng, Executive Director

Japanese American Bar Association (JABA), Catherine Endo Chuck, President

Korean American Bar Association (KABA) of Southern California, Kay Suh, President

Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) Jean Lee, President & CEO

Monte Jade West, David Jeng, Chair

National Asian American United (NAAUnited), President, Joel Wong

National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), Bonnie Wolf



Philippine American Bar Association (PABA) Los Angeles, Cherisse Cleofe, President

Sacramento Filipino American Lawyers Association (SacFALA), Justin Delacruz, President

South Asian Bar Association of Northern California (SABA-NC), Charanjit Brahma, President

Vietnamese American Bar Association of Northern California (VABANC)