

MONTEREY COUNTY



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February 8, 2021

The Honorable Jose Medina
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 101 (Medina) Ethnic Studies – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Medina:

On behalf of Monterey County, I write in support of AB 101, which will require high schools to provide ethnic studies starting in academic year 2025-26 and require students to take one semester of ethnic studies to graduate beginning in 2029-2030.

California has one of the largest and most diverse student populations in the nation. Ethnic minorities account for over 71 percent of the student population, with more than 90 languages spoken in district schools.

Given California's increasing diversity, it is important that students build knowledge of the various racial and ethnic groups in our state. Incorporating ethnic studies courses into standard high school curriculum is a means to accomplish this. Ethnic studies, promotes respect and understanding among races, supports student success and teaches critical thinking skills. Additionally the course provides students with the opportunity to learn about their respective culture in the context of California's history.

Requiring ethnic studies to be taught in high schools is an integral part of cultivating a classroom environment that is accepting of diversity. It is vital for young people to learn about their history, it is also important for them to feel like they can contribute to their communities in positive ways. AB 101 will help close the achievement gap by reducing student truancy and student enrollment, reduce drop-out rates, and better prepare Californian youth to be college prepared and career ready.

For these reasons, Monterey County strongly supports AB 101 (Medina). Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Monterey County's Public Policy Advisor, Ashley Walker of Nossaman LLP at 916-442-8888.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Wendy Root Askew
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Cc: Hon. Jose Medina, 61st Assembly District
Hon. Anna Caballero, 12th Senate District
Hon. John Laird, 17th Senate District
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