Senator Marc R. Pacheco Chair, Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight Massachusetts State House – Room 312-B Boston, MA 02133

Representative Antonio Cabral Chair, Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight Massachusetts State House – Room 466 Boston, MA 02133

September 28, 2021

Dear Senator Pacheco and Representative Cabral,

We are writing to urge you to support H.3115, An Act Ensuring Equitable Representation in the Commonwealth, filed by Representative Tackey Chan. We are a group of organizations and institutions who want to see a more equitable collection of data and treatment for Massachusetts' diverse residents. With increasing diversity in the Commonwealth, it is important to accurately document, measure and report data that informs public efforts to address social, economic, or educational inequalities which persist but may be invisible in data analyzed only through broad racial categories.

Data equity is a civil rights issue because without detailed demographic data locally, we are unable to serve the health needs of critically under-represented and under-served communities. Currently, when data is collected, they are combined to produce statistics as a single summary of an entire racial group. However, all ethnic subgroups have different histories, backgrounds, needs, and challenges. Without accurate data broken down by detailed sub-ethnic groups, critical needs of some communities in the areas, such as language, economic status, education, health, could be left unmet.

Equitable representation in population data ensures that everybody is seen, heard, counted, and accommodated. We need to ensure that our state agencies, which already collect optional demographic data based on race, also provide ethnic subgroup breakdowns to ensure full visibility, representation, and inclusion for underserved and underrepresented groups.

H.3115 suggests that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts standardize state forms to collect optional race and ethnicity data to more closely resemble the way the federal Census breaks down demographic data. This allows for more comprehensive research, analysis, and provision of services to all of our Commonwealth's diverse communities.

Every government agency that currently collects voluntary demographic data based on race or ethnicity of residents should further add voluntary subgroup options for Asian, Pacific Islander, Latino, Black and African American, and White. This would highlight and uplift data representing communities in our Commonwealth including but not limited to Vietnamese, Cambodian, Bangladeshi, Nepalese, Haitian, Cape Verdean, Ethiopian, Somalian, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Dominicans, and Colombians. We must also recognize the diversity within Native American, Middle Eastern, and North African communities in our Commonwealth, which currently have limited recognition by the Census Bureau.

We urge you to support data equity by moving H.3115 favorably through the legislative process for an affirmative vote by the Legislature.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

- 1. Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts
- 2. Action for Equity
- 3. African Community Economic Development of New England
- 4. Anti-Defamation League
- 5. Asian Pacific Islanders Civic Action Network (APIsCAN)
- 6. Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
- 7. Asian American Resource Workshop
- 8. Asian American Women's Political Initiative
- 9. Asian Community Development Corporation
- 10. Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
- 11. All Dorchester Sports and Leadership
- 12. ACLU of Massachusetts
- 13. Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
- 14. Boston Education Justice Alliance
- 15. Boston University Chinese Student Association
- 16. Brazilian Immigrant Center
- 17. Brazilian Women's Group
- 18. Brookline Asian American Family Network
- 19. Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
- 20. Castle Square Tenant Organization
- 21. Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores
- 22. Channing and Popai Liem Education Foundation
- 23. Chinatown Community Land Trust
- 24. Chinatown Residents Association
- 25. Chinese Progressive Association
- 26. Coalition for Social Justice
- 27. Codman Square NDC
- 28. Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission
- 29. Community Action Agency of Somerville
- 30. Community Labor United
- 31. DotHouse Health
- 32. Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath)
- 33. Friends of the Chinatown Library
- 34. GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)
- 35. Greater Boston Labor Council
- 36. Greater Boston Legal Services Asian Outreach Unit
- 37. Greater Malden Asian American Community Coalition
- 38. Harvard Law School Asian Pacific American Law Students Association (APALSA)
- 39. Health Imperatives
- 40. Health Law Advocates
- 41. Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health
- 42. Indivisible Acton Area
- 43. Indivisible Pittsfield

- 44. Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción
- 45. Institute for Asian American Studies in UMass Boston
- 46. Jane Doe Inc. (JDI)
- 47. Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center
- 48. Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Justice
- 49. Justice at Work
- 50. La Colaborativa
- 51. Latino Education Institute
- 52. Lawyers for Civil Rights
- 53. Lynn United for Change
- 54. Malden Neighbors Helping Neighbors
- 55. Massachusetts Asian American Educators Association (MAAEA)
- 56. Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys
- 57. Massachusetts Coalition of Domestic Workers
- 58. Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
- 59. Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance (MEJA)
- 60. Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)
- 61. Massachusetts Jobs with Justice
- 62. Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
- 63. Massachusetts Public Health Association
- 64. Massachusetts Voter Table
- 65. Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee
- 66. Mijente Members in Boston
- 67. Neighbors United for Better East Boston
- 68. New England United for Justice
- 69. Northeastern University Korean American Student Association
- 70. Northeastern University School of Law's Asian Pacific American Law Student Association
- 71. Progressive Mass
- 72. Quincy Asian Resources Inc.
- 73. Revere Youth in Action (RYIA)
- 74. Roxbury Stone House, Inc
- 75. Saheli Support and Friendship for South Asian Women and Families
- 76. Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)
- 77. South Cove Community Health Center
- 78. Southeast Asian Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
- 79. Southeast Asian American Education (SEAeD) Coalition
- 80. Suffolk University Law School's Asian Pacific American Law Student Association (APALSA)
- 81. Tech Goes Home
- 82. The Center for Hope and Healing
- 83. The Dow Fund
- 84. The Neighborhood Developers
- 85. True Alliance Center Inc.
- 86. United Interfaith Action of Southeastern MA (UIA)
- 87. Urban Edge
- 88. VietAID
- 89. Women Encouraging Empowerment
- 90. Worcester Interfaith