

# New Billboard Is Up to Protest Laurie Jenkins for Allowing Partisan Politics to Kill the Chinese American History Month

*The Chinese American Community put up the second billboard in Speaker Jenkins' district to raise awareness of the killing of Chinese American History Month.*

BELLEVUE, WA, UNITED STATE, July 14, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The second billboard was put up in Speaker Laurie Jenkins' district to protest her decision to allow partisan politics to kill Chinese American History Month. This year, under Speaker Jenkins' watch, Washington State House Democrats killed the Chinese American History Month. PRA (Public Records Act)

records revealed the final 36 hours of hyper-partisan behind-the-door political maneuvering that doomed [SB 5264](#), the Chinese American History Month bill.



The Second Billboard in Tacoma, WA Urging Speaker Laurie Jenkins To Learn From the City's Violent Past Against Chinese Americans.

In 2019, the Washington State Legislature passed [SB 5865](#), establishing October as Filipino American History Month. Inspired by this bill, Washington Asians for Equality and American Coalition for Equality advocated for a bill to establish a Chinese American History Month.

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Please hold 5264... Love to hear your take on the "politics" of not passing this bill.”

*Rep. My-Linh Thai*

In 2020, Senator Hans Zeiger from Puyallup, introduced SB 6679, near the end of the legislative session, declaring January as Chinese American history month and

encouraging public schools to commemorate the month. SB 6679 had bipartisan co-sponsors and wide legislative support from both parties, but as is common with new legislative ideas, didn't get through the process the first time.

In 2021, Senator Keith Wagoner reintroduced SB 6679 as SB 5264 for the 2021-2022 legislative

session. In 2022, the Washington State Senate quickly passed SB 5264 48 to 0. On February 12th, the Senate State Government and Elections Committee Chair, Senator Sam Hunt sent an email with the subject line "Senate bills in House" to House State Government and Tribal Relations Committee Chair, Javier Valdez. In this email, Senator Hunt included SB 5264 on their priority list and considered it among "quick and easy bills." This vote and the accompanying messages again show the strong bi-partisan support in the Senate.

The House State Government and Tribal Relations Committee passed SB 5264 unanimously. The bill was put on the House floor run list for a final floor vote on March 3rd. If passed, SB 5264 would have established January as Americans of Chinese Descent History Month.

However, less than an hour after the House Democrat Caucus decided to put SB 5264 on the run list, Rep. My-Linh Thai (D-41st) sent out a high-priority email to what is called the "House Democrat Members of Color Caucus" (MOCC) saying "I respectfully ask you to support us by voting NO to SB5264". Thai continued to say, "I can't say enough the backwardness of moving this legislation forward."

Prior to establishing Filipino American History Month in 2019, Washington had already established a Japanese Remembrance Day in 2003, and a Korean American Day in 2007. Rep. Thai did not offer an explanation for why she personally voted to establish Filipino American History Month yet called the establishment of a Chinese American History Month "backwardness". Several text messages from Rep. Thai to Speaker Jinkins in the morning of March 3rd offered a glimpse into her reason for stopping SB 5264. At 10:38 am, Rep. Thai texted Speaker Jinkins, "Please hold 5264", then at 10:54 am, Thai asked, "Love to hear your take on the "politics" of not passing this bill."

At 11:17 am on March 3rd, Rep. Cindy Ryu (D-32nd) sent out an email requesting a floor amendment to eliminate January as Chinese American History Month. The bill's sponsor, Senator Wagoner, only found out about this elimination amendment on March 4th, the cut-off day of the 2022 legislative session. In his email to Ryu, Senator Wagoner said, "I respectfully request you withdraw your amendment to my bill. I appreciate the intent to connect to other important individuals and groups but feel that it has the potential to dilute the intent of the bill. Having it brought to my attention at this late juncture doesn't allow time for us to discuss it and give your amendment the consideration it deserves. Thank you for your consideration." The amendment seemed designed to kill the bill and make sure it could not pass.

SB 5264 was never brought out for a House floor vote and died on March 4th. Although Speaker Laurie Jinkins was aware of and allowed this anti-Chinese contingent in her caucus to kill the bill, many in her Caucus were left without knowledge of those behind-the-door activities.

In an April 1st email discussing the interview request from The Spokesman-Review on SB 5264, Rep. Valdez told House Democratic Caucus Senior Communication Specialist Guy Bergstrom that "Not much I could say. After the House bill cutoff date, our Committee only had four meetings to

hear and pass Senate bills. We heard 5264 on the second meeting and passed it out unanimously on the third meeting date. Mr. James should probably talk to someone on leadership on why 5264 did not run on the Floor. Or perhaps to talk to Rep. Ryu who had a floor amendment that was dropped on the bill. " Rep. Valdez is a member of MOCC.

Another member of MOCC, Rep. Bill Ramos, also sent out emails on March 7th, three days after SB 5264 was killed, saying "I am hoping to have a specific mocc agenda item to talk this whole thing out" and "really look forward to a full open discussion. This is a complicated issue and love to get us all with full understanding of which I do not have it all either."

"Rep. Thai and Ryu architected the killing of Chinese American History Month. Under Speaker Jenkins' watch, they are now positioning themselves as leaders of the so-called "Work Group for Chinese American Day/Week/Month designation for Washington State". We see them as wolves in sheep's clothing. Speaker Jenkins left our community with no other choice but to continue putting up billboards to raise public awareness on this issue. The House Democratic Caucus states that they are an inclusive organization that works hard to do good policy work without being sidetracked by politics, but this racial bias against Chinese Americans and our issues because of politics says otherwise" said Linda Yang of WA Asians For Equality.

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