

SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM &  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

**SENATE, No. 2415**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: NOVEMBER 7, 2022

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism and Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2415.

This bill requires State agencies to update demographic data collection methods on Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, North African, and South Asian and Indian Diaspora residents of New Jersey.

Asian-Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI), Middle Easterners and North Africans (MENA), and South Asian and Indian Diaspora peoples are significant and important communities in New Jersey. Nearly one million Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders reside in the State. The number of residents who would classify as Middle Eastern and North African or as South Asian and Indian Diaspora peoples cannot be determined under current data collection methods.

Since 2000, the United States Census Bureau has separated the broader AANHPI label into two distinct categories labeled “Asian” and “Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders.” The Census Bureau currently reports data for more than 20 different ethnicities within these two categories. Middle Eastern and North African and South Asian and Indian Diaspora categories do not currently exist. There is speculation that the 2030 United State Census may include a category for Middle Eastern and North African.

This bill requires each State agency that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of residents of the State of New Jersey to use separate collection categories and tabulations for these groups. The groups would be broken down by the following categories:

- (1) each major Asian group;
- (2) each major Pacific Islander group, including Native Hawaiian;
- (3) each major Middle Eastern and North African group;
- (4) each major South Asian and Indian Diaspora group; and
- (5) other Asian or Pacific Islander group.

This bill also requires each State agency collecting demographic data to use separate collection categories and tabulations for:

- (1) the primary language spoken at home; and
- (2) the ethnic group or ancestry.

The data collected would be included in every demographic report on ancestry or ethnic origins of residents of the State of New Jersey. The data would be made public, except for personal identifying information, by posting the data on the internet website of the State agency.

Senate Bill No. 2415 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 3092 of 2022-2023.