ASIAN AMERICAN ORGANIZING PROJECT

aaopmn.org

* Asterisk signifies incumbent

- elected every 2 years
- works alongside Governor to create laws & establish state budget
- passes bills on public policy, sets levels for state spending, raises/lowers taxes, votes to uphold/override governor vetoes

Dave Pinto* (DFL)

Georgia Dietz (Republican)

What policies will advocate for to address the rise in microaggressions and hate crimes against our Asian community?

Yes, this is a major concern. During the 2020 session, I was proud to vote in favor of a bill (HF 3837 - Hornstein) which would have improved the response to and reporting of crimes motivated by bias. The bill is the product of listening sessions held around the state, with input from a wide variety of community groups. It would increase reporting options for those experiencing these crimes; collect and compile data; increase training and reporting requirements for law enforcement; increase penalties for certain crimes when they are motivated by bias; and overall increase collaboration and trust between law enforcement agencies and community organizations. Passing HF 3837 would be a great start.

No Contact Information Found.

If you work with the campaign for Georgia Dietz, please email info@aaopmn.org to answer these questions.

Many of our youth and young people have been left out of national conversations and financial help, even while continuing to work in essential jobs and balancing that work with their schooling and families. What are your plans to ensure that our youth and young people's voices are also incorporated within legislative decisions?

It's critical that youth and student voices be incorporated into policymaking. I've met several times with members of the Minnesota Alliance with Youth and look for every opportunity to engage younger constituents in my work.

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How will you address concerns raised by our youth and young people in regards to Governor Walz's fall semester school plans?

Regarding school plans for fall, I've been working closely with my colleagues on the House education committees, who have held multiple hearings and have heard regularly from students on this topic. It's a challenging issue: some students and families want more in-person learning, some want less. It's important to recognize that district learning is exacerbating the longstanding disparities in our state – and at the same time that the pandemic itself has a disparate impact on communities of color as well. There are no easy answers here. In the meantime, I'm glad that the Governor's order allows families to choose distance learning if they want to.

No Contact Information Found.

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How will you ensure that our youth and young people also receive financial support during this time?

Regarding financial support for young people, I support several bills introduced this spring which would have made high school students eligible for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. The Republican Senate was not interested, but my colleagues and I will continue to push.

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There are many small business owners, many of which are Asian-owned and have seen a decrease in business since COVID-19 due to xenophobia. What are your plans to ensure that our small businesses owners, especially our Asian-owned ones, continue to be safe during a pandemic while ensuring the longevity of their business?

Earlier this summer, the Legislature passed a bill providing $60 million in grants to small businesses harmed by the pandemic. Our House DFL caucus pushed successfully for roughly half of this funding to be specifically targeted to minority-owned businesses, owners of ethnic malls (such as Hmong Village) for rent forgiveness for small vendors, and several other groups. We've also been pushing the PROMISE Act, which would provide grants and loans to businesses in rebuild communities affected by the civil unrest following the death of George Floyd. It's so frustrating that this has continued to be blocked by the Republican Senate.

Do you support mandated ethnic studies as a high school graduation requirement?

I do support increasing access to ethnic studies courses, as well as broader efforts to expand the state's social studies standards to require students to learn and reflect on racial identity (their own and others') through a historical lens. I should note that these social studies standards are currently under review and revision, with a first draft due in late November.

COVID-19 has shifted many polling places for this past Primary Election. Many organizations and individuals are advocating for absentee voting by mail as well. Absentee voting by mail can be confusing to many and even more so when you can't read or write English well. Many of our Asian community members may not have assistance or language skills to complete an absentee ballot by mail. How do you hope to shift access to the polls for all?

The right to vote is sacred in our democracy. I strongly support the election outreach efforts of our Secretary of State's office. This includes providing election information and materials in many languages, including Hmong, Chinese, Laotian, Vietnamese, Khmer, and Karen; collaboration with community leaders; public service announcements (PSAs) promoting election information on different community; and much more.