



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 7 2015

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 176 without my signature.

Assembly Bill 176 would require the Regents of the University of California, the Trustees of the California State University, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges and the Department of Managed Health Care to collect and report demographic information for Asians, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders by specified ethnic categories after the next census.

To be sure, there is value in understanding data on race, ethnicity, gender and other aspects of identity. On a broad level, these demographic data can signal important changes in society. On a practical level, they can help elucidate how our laws and programs can be shaped to reflect a changing population.

Despite this utility, I am wary of the ever growing desire to stratify. Dividing people into ethnic or other subcategories may yield more information, but not necessarily greater wisdom about what actions should follow. To focus just on ethnic identity may not be enough.

CSU, community colleges, and UC already provide many ways in which to self-identify, including choosing among several ethnic identities. In the case of CSU, there are 50 choices for API applicants alone. Codifying the collection and reporting of at least 12 API groups several years into the future appears unnecessary, or at least premature.

Sincerely,

  
Edmund G. Brown Jr.