



Legislation Text

File #: RES 23-1507, **Version:** 1

Urging the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders to act and urge the U.S. Census Bureau to reclassify the Hmong Ethnic Group in all U.S. Census Data products as Southeast Asian.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Census Bureau has misclassified the Hmong ethnic group under the East Asian regional group in their Data Products titled the 2020 Census State Redistricting Summary File and the upcoming Detailed Demographic and Housing Characteristics Proof of Concept; and

WHEREAS, the Hmong diaspora transgresses several states and continents thus resulting in a shared refugee experience with many ethnic groups across Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia, who continue to endure the traumas of the Vietnam War in their adjustments to new societies today; and

WHEREAS, the Hmong are set apart from other Southeast Asian refugee groups because of their involvement in the Secret War during the Vietnam War, which was an act of resistance against militarized violence dating back to their ethnic persecution led by the Qing dynasty in China; and

WHEREAS, misclassifying the Hmong as East Asian not only strips them of this unique experience, but also invalidates their sociopolitical identities, as the Hmong are not tied to a geographical location and have no nation-state; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul City Council acknowledges that the City of St. Paul is now home to 11.43% of the total 1.68% of the Hmong population in the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, Ward 6 is the home also to the highest density of the Hmong community in Minnesota, whom despite the many barriers preventing them from full social and economic participation, are integral business partners to the state's immigrant economy, while boasting some of the state's largest historical ethnic enclaves and most beloved small businesses on the East Side of St. Paul; and

WHEREAS, data from the U.S. Census is crucial to the process of which state and local entities allocate funding and resources for aid and other assistance to the communities with the highest needs, like the Hmong and several other immigrant and refugee communities; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul City Council also joins Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC), as well as many other Hmong and Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) leaders and organizations in voicing their concerns and advocating for the U.S. Census Bureau to reclassify and correct the misclassification of the Hmong ethnic group; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Census Bureau has yet to implement the urgent requests nor work with the broader Hmong community and other AANHPI leaders and organizations to better engage in conversation and strengthen their relationship and understanding to the Hmong community; and

WHEREAS, the prolonged effects of this misclassification would skew the process of which state and local entities engage in the allocation of funding and resources for timely aid and other assistance to communities with the highest needs, like the Hmong and several other immigrant and refugee groups; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council calls on the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native

Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) to work with the U.S. Census Bureau to swiftly reclassify and correct the misclassification of the Hmong ethnic group to “Southeast Asian.”