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**ASIAN AMERICAN
INSTITUTE**



MEMBER OF
ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER
FOR ADVANCING JUSTICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Asian American Institute Testifies at Senate Redistricting Hearing

Chicago, IL- Asian Americans from around the Chicago area will be testify in front of the Illinois Senate Redistricting Committee on Monday to prevent fragmentation of the Asian American community. According to the Asian American Institute and its partner organizations, the Illinois Asian American community has grown by nearly 40 percent over the last decade but has never seen an Asian American elected to the Illinois General Assembly.

"It is imperative that Asian Americans input is taken into consideration during the process of redrawing the new legislative boundaries," said Ami Gandhi, Asian American Institute's legal director. "Over the last decade, we have significantly increased voter registration, voter turnout, and overall civic engagement, but fragmentation of our communities across different districts has prevented us from electing the candidate of our choice."

The hearing on March 28, 2011, is the first of four public hearings scheduled to solicit input for the upcoming redistricting process.

"The new Illinois Rights Act of 2011 provides us with a powerful tool to protect the voting rights our community. Even though we may come from different countries, there are many cultural and social similarities between our groups," comments Kiran Siddiqui, executive director of the Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services. "Our community is united by our common immigrant histories, income levels and access to services."

"These hearings are the first step to increasing the transparency of the redistricting process, and we encourage the General Assembly to share draft maps so that community input can be meaningful," said Sik Sohn, executive director, Korean American Resource and Cultural Center.

The Asian American Institute, a member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, calls on state leaders to listen and respond to Asian American voices during the redistricting process and beyond, keep the Asian American community whole, and make the entire redistricting process transparent.

Redistricting testimonies can be found on AAI's Website at aaichicago.org

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The Asian American Institute (www.aaichicago.org) is one of the leading pan-Asian nonprofit organizations in the Midwest, dedicated to empowering the Asian American community through advocacy, by utilizing research, education, and coalition-building. Asian American Institute, Asian American Justice Center, Asian Law Caucus, and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center are members of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice.



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