

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
Senator Thomas Umberg, Chair
2023-2024 Regular Session

SB 403 (Wahab)
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Hearing Date: April 25, 2023
Fiscal: Yes
Urgency: No
AWM

SUBJECT

Discrimination on the basis of caste

DIGEST

This bill clarifies that discrimination on the basis of caste, as defined, is prohibited under existing anti-discrimination statutes, as specified.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California has a broad policy against discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, ancestry, and a number of other characteristics that have no bearing on a person's character or individual merit. The Unruh Civil Rights Act protects against arbitrary discrimination by private businesses open to the public; the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) protects against discrimination in employment and housing; and statutes in the Education and Government Codes protect against discrimination in public services, programs, and education.

From time to time, this State has recognized the need to clarify the scope of our anti-discrimination laws to reflect shifts in the ways people understand their identities. For example, in 2011, AB 887 (Atkins, Ch. 719, Stats. 2011) was enacted to expressly add "gender identity" and "gender expression" throughout both the Unruh Civil Rights Act and FEHA and defined "gender expression" to mean a person's gender-related appearance and behavior whether or not stereotypically associated with the person's assigned sex at birth, to clarify the scope of those laws' prohibition on gender-based discrimination.

This bill adds "caste" as an expressly prohibited basis for discrimination under these laws, in response to increasing reports that caste-based discrimination is occurring in California. According to the author and sponsors of the bill, caste-based discrimination is occurring in businesses, workplaces, housing, and schools, particularly in communities with high populations of individuals from South Asian diasporic

communities. While caste-based discrimination is already implicitly covered under the protected categories of race and color, ethnicity, national origin, and ancestry, this bill is intended to make the prohibition explicit in order to clearly signal to businesses, employers, landlords and other housing providers, and public programs and schools that discrimination on the basis of caste is not permitted in this state.

This bill is sponsored by the Alphabet Workers Union–Communication Workers of America, the Ambedkar Association of North America, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Equality Labs, Hindus for Caste Equity, Jakarta Movement, the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Sikh Coalition, the South Asian Network, the Tech Equity Collaborative, and is supported by over 80 organizations and approximately 40 individuals. This bill is opposed by 40 organizations and over 1,400 individuals.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE LAW

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Unruh Civil Rights Act, which provides that all persons in California are free and equal, and regardless of a person’s actual or perceived sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sexual orientation, citizenship, primary language, or immigration status, everyone is entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments. (Civ. Code, § 51.)
- 2) Provides that it is the policy of this State to afford all persons in public schools equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of this state, regardless of their actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, immigration status, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. (Ed. Code, §§ 200, 210.2.)
- 3) Provides that no person in the State shall, on the basis of their actual or perceived sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, or sexual orientation, be unlawfully denied full and equal access to the benefits of, or be unlawfully subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity that is conducted, operated, or administered by the state or by any state agency, is funded directly by the state, or receives any financial assistance from the state, including at the California State University. (Gov. Code, § 11135.)
- 4) Establishes the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), which prohibits discrimination in housing and employment on the basis of a person’s actual or perceived race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability,

mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or military and veteran status, subject to specified exceptions. (Gov. Code, §§ 12920 et seq.)

- 5) Establishes the Civil Rights Department (CRD) (formerly DFEH), which is tasked with enforcing California's civil rights laws, issuing publications that will tend to minimize or eliminate prohibited discrimination, providing assistance to communities and persons in resolving disputes relating to discriminatory practices based on race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, veteran or military status, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, age, reproductive health decisionmaking, or sexual orientation that impair the rights of persons in those communities under the Constitution or laws of the United States or of this state. (Gov. Code, §§ 12930, 12931.)

This bill:

- 1) Clarifies that discrimination on the basis of caste is prohibited under the civil rights laws set forth in 1)-4), above.
- 2) Defines "caste," for purposes of 1), as an individual's perceived position in a system of social stratification on the basis of inherited status; a system of social stratification on the basis of inherited status may be characterized by factors that may include, but are not limited to: inability or restricted ability to alter inherited status; socially enforced restrictions on marriage, private and public segregation, and discrimination; and social exclusion on the basis of perceived status.
- 3) Extends the CRD's authority under 5) to include anti-caste-discrimination enforcement activities, consistent with its other activities surrounding other protected characteristics.

COMMENTS

1. Author's comment

According to the author:

I have heard from constituents about their experiences with caste-based discrimination---which is an unfamiliar concept for many---in the workplace, in education, healthcare, and housing. Dalit women, for instance, have spoken to me about receiving death and rape threats for speaking out about the discrimination they have endured here in California. While existing anti-discrimination laws cover discrimination on the basis of caste, the term is not expressly listed, and I believe adding the term will strengthen our laws and

make clear that California does not tolerate any type of discrimination. Just because we are in the United States does not mean biases that originated elsewhere are not present here.

2. California's broad anti-discrimination laws

The Unruh Civil Rights Act “is this state’s bulwark against arbitrary discrimination in places of public accommodation.”¹ The statute enumerates several prohibited bases for discrimination – including race, national origin, and ancestry – which are illustrative of characteristics protected from discrimination, rather than restrictive.² “The Legislature’s desire to banish such practices from California’s community life has led [the California Supreme Court] to interpret the Act’s coverage ‘in the broadest sense reasonably possible.’ ”³

California also prohibits discrimination on the basis of a range of characteristics, including race, sex, color, ancestry, and national origin, in publicly provided and funded activities and benefits, including at the California State University.⁴ Additionally, California has policies of affording students in public schools equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state and to prohibit discrimination based characteristics including disability, gender, nationality, and race or ethnicity.⁵ To that end, public schools in California “have an affirmative duty to protect public school students from discrimination and harassment engendered by race, gender, sexual orientation or disability.”⁶

FEHA protects Californians’ civil rights at work and in the home. FEHA “is a comprehensive scheme for the realization of the state’s public policy ‘to protect and safeguard the right and opportunity of all persons to seek, obtain and hold employment without abridgement on account of’ enumerated characteristics,⁷ and provides greater protection than federal law against discrimination in housing.⁸ Like the Unruh Civil Rights Act, “FEHA is to be ‘construed liberally.’ ”⁹

In all of these statutory frameworks, a person violates the prohibition against discrimination if they discriminate against another person on the basis of what the discriminator *perceives* to be the victim’s protected characteristic, whether or not the

¹ *Isbister v. Boys’ Club of Santa Cruz, Inc.* (1985) 40 Cal.3d 72, 75.

² *In re Cox* (1970) 3 Cal.3d 205, 212.

³ *Isbister, supra*, 40 Cal.4d at pp. 75-76.

⁴ Gov. Code, § 11135.

⁵ Ed. Code, §§ 200, 210.2. A “public” school covered by the policy includes any private institution that accepts public funding, exempting an educational institution controlled by a religious organization if the principles are inconsistent with the religious tenets of that organization. (*Id.*, §§ 220, 221.)

⁶ *Hector F. v. El Centro Elementary School Dist.* (2014) 227 Cal.App.4th 331, 333.

⁷ *State Personnel Bd. v. Fair Employment & Housing Com.* (1985) 39 Cal.3d 422, 428.

⁸ *Brown v. Smith* (1997) 55 Cal.App.4th 767, 780.

⁹ *Auburn Woods I Homeowners Assn. v. Fair Employment & Housing Com.* (2004) 121 Cal.App.4th 1578, 1590.

perception is correct.¹⁰ So, for example, if an employer took negative employment action against an employee on the basis of what they believed to be the employee's race, the employee could state a claim for employment discrimination even though the employee was not actually a member of that race.¹¹

3. This bill expressly adds discrimination on the basis of caste to California's anti-discrimination laws, clarifying existing law

This bill clarifies that discrimination on the basis of caste is prohibited under the Unruh Civil Rights Act, state laws prohibiting discrimination in publicly funded programs and public education, and FEHA. This change is intended to provide additional clarity to businesses, employers, and schools about what forms of discrimination are prohibited. While it may seem clear to some that caste falls into existing enumerated categories, the reports of caste-based discrimination in the state suggest that employers and other entities are not adequately protecting against this form of discrimination without a specific statutory reference to caste.

As defined in the bill, "caste" is a person's perceived position in a system of social stratification on the basis of inherited status; a caste system may be characterized by factors that may include, but are not limited to: inability or restricted ability to alter inherited status; socially enforced restrictions on marriage, private and public segregation, and discrimination; and social exclusion on the basis of perceived status. Caste can intersect with, and incorporate, existing concepts of race and color, ethnicity, national origin, and ancestry.¹²

Although caste systems are hierarchical, the bill is neutral in its approach to the nature of the caste-based discrimination: discrimination on the basis of someone's perceived position in the system is prohibited regardless of whether the position is considered a "high" position or a "low" position in the hierarchy. Accordingly, a person who experienced discrimination because someone believed they were in a dominant caste would have just as much of a claim as a person who experienced discrimination because it was believed they were a member of a historically disfavored caste. Similarly, the bill does not require both the discriminator and the victim of discrimination to identify as being a member of a caste system; a person who believed they were not part of a system could still violate the laws if they discriminated against a person based on their understanding of the person's caste. The bill is also neutral in that it applies to all caste systems, regardless of the origin of the system.

¹⁰ See Civ. Code, § 51(e)(6); Ed. Code, § 210.2; Gov. Code, §§ 11135(d), 12926(o), 12955(m).

¹¹ See, e.g., *Berro v. County of Los Angeles* (Cal.Ct.App., Dec. 22, 2014) 2014 WL 7271181, pp. *6-7.

¹² For example, some legal scholars argue that caste can be considered a form of race for purposes of the federal Title VII and Section 1981 anti-discrimination laws. (Brown et al., *Does U.S. Federal Employment Law Now Cover Caste Discrimination Based on Untouchability? If All Else Fails There Is The Possible Application of Bostock v. Clayton County*, 46 N.Y.U. Rev. of Law & Social Change 117, 125.)

The bill is a response to numerous reports that caste-based discrimination is occurring in California. In 2022, the California State University updated its anti-discrimination policy to expressly prohibit discrimination on the basis of caste.¹³ The CRD is currently litigating against Cisco Systems, Inc., for allegedly engaging in discrimination on the basis of caste; the complaint pleads caste as a component of all of ancestry, national origin/ethnicity, and race/color.¹⁴ Many of the reports of caste-based discrimination appear to be on the basis of perceived caste status within the South Asian caste system.¹⁵ For example, the South Asian Network, one of the bill's sponsors, notes:

In our service provision we see caste operate across many domains and our staff have fielded several complaints that show the extent of the problem. It shows up where caste manifests amongst workers in the restaurant field and construction work where caste-oppressed laborers face discriminatory and dangerous working conditions while facing harassment, wage theft, and even trafficking. We also see it show up in the discrimination amongst the small business in our service provision area. It also shows up in housing discrimination where caste-oppressed families can be denied housing rentals if the landlord is dominant caste and finds out they come from a lower caste. And finally caste shows up in interpersonal violence where caste is an element of coercive control that many caste-oppressed survivors complain about.

As discussed further below, the bill's opponents strenuously object to what they perceive as this bill's association of caste-based discrimination with South Asians. They argue that, while this bill does not expressly limit its application to the perceived South Asian caste hierarchy, popular American culture treats caste as an exclusively South Asian phenomenon; and that, given that Asians and Asian Americans are already

¹³ See CSU Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Exploitation, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation (Nondiscrimination Policy), art. II, available at <https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/12891658/latest/>. All links in this analysis are current as of April 23, 2023.

¹⁴ See *California Department of Fair Employment and Housing v. Cisco Systems, Inc. et al.* (20CV372366). The CRD recently dismissed the two individual defendants and is scheduled to mediate with Cisco Systems later this year.

¹⁵ The socially constructed nature of caste systems can mean there is no absolute consensus on the precise boundaries of a system. (Cf., e.g., *Ozawa v. U.S.* (1922) 260 U.S. 178, 196-197 (discussing different frameworks for discerning the meaning of "white person").) For example, in the context of the South Asian caste system, there is disagreement among the supporters and opponents about whether a rigid caste hierarchy is native to South Asia or was the product of colonialism and a British effort to impose an intra-South Asian hierarchy to bolster British imperial rule. This is a fascinating debate for historians, but it does not meaningfully affect the policy set forth in the bill, i.e., ending discrimination occurring in the present. The fact that some persons have apparently decided to embrace a socially constructed caste hierarchy and discriminate on that basis in California is adequate reason for this Legislature to prohibit that discrimination, even if other persons who may be part of that hierarchy disagree on its existence or its historical origin. In other words, there does not need to be absolute consensus on the origin of, or discourse surrounding, a concept that gives rise to discrimination before a state can take action to prevent that discrimination.

disfavored classes within America's white supremacist hierarchy,¹⁶ adding "caste" as an explicit category will serve as an additional basis for anti-Asian bias.¹⁷ There is also concern that, by codifying the concept of caste, persons of South Asian descent will be required to identify as having a particular caste, even if they and their families left that identity behind.

In the context of the surge of anti-Asian hate in this country, fears that non-Asian Americans will latch onto caste-related concepts as a pretext for anti-Asian stigma are understandable. But, as the authors and supporters note, caste-based discrimination is currently happening in California; failing to codify the concept of caste could slow the availability of redress and the ability of caste-discriminated individuals to obtain justice. Moreover, any discrimination against persons of South Asian descent would also be prohibited by the state's anti-discrimination laws,¹⁸ which should provide some measure of protection against those fears.

With respect to the concern that including "caste" will force persons, and particularly persons of South Asian descent, to identify as having a caste, the bill was crafted carefully to avoid this outcome. The bill's definition of "caste" deliberately refers to a person's *perceived* caste. To take advantage of this bill's protections, no one has to affirmatively embrace a caste identity (though of course they may); they simply need to establish that the discriminator *believed* that the person was a member of a particular caste and engaged in discrimination on that basis. This is consistent with the existing prohibitions on discrimination on the basis of perceived characteristics, without reifying caste as a phenomenon that exists objectively outside of the discriminator's belief in the system and the victim's position in it.

¹⁶ Which may also be a caste system; in *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*, Isabel Wilkerson argues that the American white supremacist hierarchy is a caste system. (Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent* (2020), p. 17 (the "shape-shifting, unspoken, race-based caste pyramid in the United States is one of the "three caste systems that have stood out to this day," along with the "tragically accelerated, chilling, and officially vanquished caste system of Nazi Germany," the "lingering, millennia-long caste system of India.")).

¹⁷ Opponents similarly express concern that codifying "caste" could give rise to anti-Hindu bias, so it is worth noting that the concept of "caste" is not inherent to a single religion and does not necessarily incorporate religion; neither the supporters nor opponents of the bill treat caste as an exclusively Hindu phenomenon. This is confirmed by a study by the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, which reports that Muslims, Buddhist, Sikh, and Christians fall into Indian legal caste categories in varying rates. (Badrinathan et al., *Social Realities of Indian Americans: Results From the 2020 American Attitudes Study*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2021) p. 19.) And even if some forms of caste-based discrimination had a religious component, a generally applicable antidiscrimination law that "prohibits all discrimination without reference to motivation" and whose "object is to prohibit discrimination irrespective of reason" does not run afoul of the Free Exercise Clause or the California Constitution's guarantee of the free exercise and enjoyment of religion. (*Smith v. Fair Employment & Housing Com.* (2006) 12 Cal.4th 1143, 1161-1162.) This bill thus does not appear to pose any free exercise concerns.

¹⁸ E.g., *Marina Point, Ltd. v. Wolfson* (1982) 30 Cal.3d 721, 726 ("Under the [Unruh Civil Rights Act], however, an individual who has committed no such misconduct cannot be excluded solely because he falls within a class of persons whom the owner believes is more likely to engage in misconduct than some other group").

Relatedly, some opponents have stated the concern that the state will begin policing marriage, due to the definition of a “caste” system as one that may include socially enforced restrictions on marriage. This misunderstands the purpose of the definition. The reference to marriage restrictions is for the purpose of identifying whether a discriminator may be applying a caste framework in dealing with others; because many caste systems enforce caste through marriage restrictions, and by penalizing those who marry outside the caste-prescribed boundaries, a focus on marriage could help an employer, or a business, determine whether a person is trying to determine the caste of another for discriminatory purposes. So, for example, if a hiring manager asked a potential employee questions about their spouse’s last name and profession, this could be offered as evidence that the hiring manager was attempting to ascertain the potential employee’s caste. This bill does not provide a basis for the state, or for any person or entity covered by the laws being amended, to preemptively start inquiring about a person’s marriage status or who a person’s spouse is; that is exactly the kind of conduct this bill is trying to prevent.

4. Arguments in support

According to the co-sponsors of the bill, the Alphabet Workers Union – Communication Workers of America, the Ambedkar Association of North America, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Equality Labs, Hindus for Caste Equity, Jakarta Movement, the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Sikh Coalition, the South Asian Network, the Tech Equity Collaborative:

California is home to many South Asians who contribute immensely to local education, corporate, and community organizations. Our California members affirm that caste-oppressed families in the state not only experience significant discrimination based on race but caste as well. Caste may not be as visible as race to the California legislature, but it is a longstanding system of exclusion both in our homelands and within intergovernmental bodies like the UN, the EU, and many others...

We ask[] that you stand with and create safe harbors for our caste-oppressed neighbors, friends, co-workers, faith leaders, and family members so that they can safely come out and exercise their rights. Without institutional support and protection, caste-oppressed Californians will endure continued discrimination.

According to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance:

Caste-based discrimination is recognized and prohibited under the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which the United States of America ratified in 1994. As Article 1(1) reflects, States drafted ICERD to incorporate a broad definition of racial discrimination. Article 1(1)

states “in this Convention, the term “racial discrimination” shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life.”

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in its General recommendation No.29¹⁹ (2002) strongly reaffirmed that “discrimination based on “descent” includes discrimination against members of communities based on forms of social stratification such as caste and analogous systems of inherited status which nullify or impair their equal enjoyment of human rights” ...

Passing this bill into law and adding caste to the grounds for discrimination listed in various sections of the State of California legislation would strengthen the legal framework in place to recognise and prohibit discrimination, as recognised under ICERD and other international human rights treaties.

5. Arguments in opposition

Many opponents expressed dismay at this bill’s recognition of the concept of caste in state law and concerns that recognizing the concept in law will, perversely, encourage the adoption of caste-based identities in the United States. For example, according to the Dalit Bahujan Solidarity Network:

Most of our Dalit Bahujan organization members in California DO NOT identify themselves as Dalit because “Caste” and/or “Dalit” both are completely irrelevant in the United States. Most of our second generation US-born Indian American children do not even know their “Caste” because it is completely irrelevant. We, the members of Dalit Bahujan organizations are an integral part of the diverse and culturally rich Indian American diaspora. We share common Indian cultural values, celebrate and enjoy our Indian festivals together, celebrate important personal events such as birthdays, anniversaries together, visit and pray at the same Hindu temples together without anyone ever worrying about “Caste” and/or “Dalit.” We, the Indian Americans, work hard and take pride in contributing to American society. We are contributors and don’t want to identify ourselves as “Caste-Oppressed.” SB 403’s bill language now unintentionally forces our Dalit Bahujan organization members to retain our identity as “Dalit,” i.e., “Caste-Oppressed” for the fear of being labeled as “Caste Oppressors” if we choose not to identify ourselves as Dalit.

¹⁹ United Nations, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, General recommendation No.29 (2002), available at

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCERD%2FGEC%2F7501&Lang=en.

Other opponents express concern that expressly codifying caste as a prohibited basis for discrimination will, perversely, increase discrimination against all persons of South Asian descent. The Hindu American Foundation writes:

Absent a historical or current legal basis to regulate caste in the United States and the lack of an agreed-upon legal, academic or sociological definition, will administrators and the state be asked to rely on India's laws related to caste and impose foreign laws on those working or residing in California? Or will administrators simply treat people of South Asian origin as presumptively guilty because SB-403 states as much? Will only South Asians be forced to answer intrusive questions about or be judged for who they are married to because the state has defined caste as limited to [marriage]? Or perhaps, will South Asians, unlike members of every other racial or ethnic group, be required by the state or policy administrators to identify as "oppressed" or "oppressor"?

SUPPORT

Alphabet Workers Union – Communication Workers of America (co-sponsor)

Ambedkar Association of North America (co-sponsor)

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (co-sponsor)

Equality Labs (co-sponsor)

Hindus for Caste Equity (co-sponsor)

Jakarta Movement (co-sponsor)

Sikh Coalition (co-sponsor)

Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (co-sponsor)

South Asian Network (co-sponsor)

Tech Equity Collaborative (co-sponsor)

Academics in Support of SB 403

ACLU California Action

Alameda County Democratic Party, Central Committee

Ambedkar International Center

Ambedkar International Co-Ordination Society

Ambedkar International Mission Center Houston, USA

Ambedkar International Mission Society, Calgary

Ambedkar International Social Reform Organization

Ambedkar King Study Circle

Ambedkar Times

Ambedkarite Buddhist Association of Texas

Ambedkarites International Mission Society – Canada

Americans Against Caste Discrimination

Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus

Asian American Disinformation Table

Begumpura Cultural Society of New York

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action California

Boston South Asian Coalition
Boston Study Group
California Association of Human Relations Commissions
California Employment Lawyers Association
California Faculty Association
California Immigrant Policy Center
Chetna Association of Canada
Coalition of Americans for Pluralism in India
Coalition of Seattle Indian Americans
Consumer Attorneys of California
Council on American-Islamic Relations, California
Dalit Solidarity Forum
Desh Doaba
DFW Shri Guru Ravidass Organization, Mesquite, TX
Dhamma Waves
Dr. Ambedkar International Mission, Toronto
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Educational Aid Society, Fremont, CA
Dr. Cornel West
Federation of Indian American Ambedkarities of Bay Area
Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective
Friends for Education International
Global NRI Forum
Global Bahujan Group
Great Truth
Hidden Leaf Foundation
Hindus for Human Rights
India Civil Watch International
Indian American Muslim Council
International Bahujan Organization
International Bajuhan Organization CA
International Bodhisattva Guru Ravidass Organization Inc.
Legal Aid at Work
me too. International
Mental Health Professionals for Caste Equity and Healing
National Academic Coalition for Caste Equity
National Association of Social Workers - California Chapter
Periyar Ambedkar Study Circle
Periyar International USA
Power in Education
Proud Ravidassia Global Organization
Radha Swami Rasila Satsang Center, Fresno, CA
Sahayaatra International Alliance for Social Justice
Saman Sangh
Santa Clara County Democratic Party

Seattle Councilmember Ksharma Sawant
Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha, Fresno, CA
Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha, New York
Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, Pittsburgh, CA
Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, Rio Linda, CA
Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, Selma, CA
Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, Union City, CA
Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, Yuba City, CA
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Socialist Alternative – Bay Area
South Asia Scholar Activist Collective
South Asian Coalition to Renew Democracy
South Asian Dalit Adivasi Network, Canada
South Asian Left Activist Movement
South Asian SOAR
Southern Asian Bar Association of North America
Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha Ontario
Sri Guru Ravidass Society, Calgary
Stanford Heisler Sharp, LLP
Stop AAPI Hate
Tech Workers for Caste Equity
United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial
discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
United Way of Northern California
V-Day
Workers Strike Back
Approximately 40 individuals

OPPOSITION

Ambedkar-Phule Network of American Dalits and Bahujans
American Hindu Federation
American Hindus Against Defamation
American Muslim and Multifaith Women's Empowerment Coalition
Americans for Equality
Americans4Hindus
Annapoorna USA Foundation
Bangladeshi Minorities in USA
Bay Area Youth Vaishnav Parivar
Bharati Tamil Sangam
Coalition of Hindus of North America
Dalit-Bahujan Solidarity Network
Federation of Indo-Americans of Northern California
Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies

Fremont Hindu Temple
Hindu American Foundation
Hindu American Political Action Committee
Hindu Community Institute
Hindu Cultural Center
Hindu Mandir Executives' Conference
Hindu Speakers Bureau
HinduACTion
HinduPact
Hindus Not Caste-Opressors
HSS-USA
India Heritage Foundation
Indian Americans of Irvine and Orange County
Indo-American Community Federation
InterfaithShaadi
Mandir
My Temple
Sewa International, Inc.
Shiva Murgan Temple
Silicon Valley Chinese Association
Silicon Valley Interreligious Council
The Khalsa Today
Vedic Dharma Samaj/Fremont Hindu Temple
Vietnamese American Conservative Association
Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America - Los Angeles
Yoga Bharati
Over 1,400 individuals

RELATED LEGISLATION

Pending legislation: None known.

Prior legislation:

AB 699 (O'Donnell, Ch. 493, Stats. 2017) expressly added "immigration status" as a protected status for purposes of the state's policy prohibiting discrimination in public educational institutions.

SB 600 (Pan, Ch. 282, Stats. 2015) extended the protections of the Unruh Civil Rights Act to persons regardless of citizenship, primary language, or immigration status.
