

Asian American Coalition for Education  
P.O. Box 276  
Short Hills, NJ 07078

July 24, 2015

Ms. Catherine Lhamon  
Assistant Secretary  
Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-1100

Dear Assistant Secretary Lhamon:

We are writing to you regarding a complaint filed on July 20, 2015 with your office by an Asian American father against nine universities including Yale University, Columbia University, Duke University, University of Pennsylvania, Brown University, Dartmouth University, Cornell University, University of Chicago and Amherst College. The complaint states that “My daughter's (an Asian American) case is typical of American universities discriminating against Asian students. She ranked number 4 in her class, with almost perfect SAT/ACT scores. She was also a top student in extracurricular activities: she was ranked top 8 in the National Debate (policy debate) and top 32 in the National Debate Tournament (policy debate); she was No. 2 in the New England and MA State rowing competition; she was the chief pianist in her high school band for 3 years, and the second-seat clarinet player in the high school band. However, while more than 16 of her classmates of other races with lower GPA/SAT/ACT and similar (at least not better) extracurricular activities were admitted to the Ivy League (and similar) colleges, my daughter was not able to get into any American college! Her application was rejected by all of them.”

We feel outraged by such severe discriminations against this outstanding Asian-American applicant. It is un-American for so many universities to deny her enrollment while selecting less qualified applicants simply because she was born with the “wrong race!” Her case clearly illustrates that the discriminatory admissions practices are widespread, happening more than at Ivy League Universities. We strongly request your office to review this complaint with full and fair consideration consistent with applicable law, rules and regulations, and request you to take immediate actions you deem warranted to protect her, an Asian-American against any infringements on her constitutional rights of equal protection under the law, including urge relevant universities to correct their decisions.

In May 2014, President Obama made a promise to Asian-Americans: “let us ensure the laws respect everyone, civil rights apply to everyone, and everyone who works hard and plays by the rules has a chance to get ahead.” Asian-Americans are the ones who work hard and play by the rules. The discrimination alleged by the complaint is indefensible, improper, and immoral. In the absence of any meaningful enforcement actions taken by the U.S, Government, Ivy League universities and other American universities are still violating the civil rights of Asian-American applicants on a continuous and systematic basis. We sincerely request your office to take action now!

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. S. H.', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the text 'Organizing Committee'.

Organizing Committee

Asian American Coalition for Education