

Dear Senator Harris,

My name is Aubrey and I am a first grader at Matthew Turner Elementary in Benicia, California. I wanted to tell you about my experience growing up as an Asian American student in California.

When I have dumplings for lunch people back away from me and tell me that my dumplings smell gross. They hold their noses and I start to feel weird and sad. I don't understand why I feel weird when I am American like them.

I was born in Oakland California and my parents are Filipino American. I didn't really understand this until I watched Fresh Off The Boat on TV. I like Fresh Off The Boat because it is funny. It also shows me what might happen in my own life. A story I can relate to is when Eddie Huang (the main character) was embarrassed to bring his Chinese lunch to school because people might make fun of him. He wanted "white food" because he was embarrassed of his culture and he was afraid his friends would make fun of him. This happened to me too in my school. There are only a few Filipinos in my school so most of my classmates don't understand my food. They bring sandwiches and I always pack rice and noodles. I am different from Eddie because I like my food and I don't want to eat any other food.

I am happy to see this show on TV. It is my favorite show because its funny and it also makes me think about my own life growing up with mostly white classmates. Eddie's character helps me understand my own life as a Filipino American. He is good role model for me because even though he is different in his school he could still make friends and fit into school. He was even popular with his raps!

After watching this show, I thought to myself it is better to be myself. If every person in the whole entire world were perfect it would be like everybody is the same person. We are lucky that God made us different people from different backgrounds. Remember every body is unique. I am thankful for role models like Eddie and you, Senator Harris, because you guys inspire me to be somebody in my own life and most importantly to be myself. Thank you for being my role model. I hope I can meet you one day.

Love,
Aubrey Ilasco