Five Civil Rights Organizations Oppose Latest Immigration Actions in the House

House Republicans Introduce Two Anti-Immigrant Bills During Immigrant Heritage Month

Atlanta, GA, June 28, 2017 — Representative Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) introduced a set of anti-immigrant bills that are scheduled for a vote later this week. These are the latest in a line of bills that outline a clear anti-immigrant strategy by House leadership and this administration.

H.R. 3003 seeks to authorize the Federal Government to withhold millions of dollars in federal funding for localities with limited detainer policies, sanctuary city policies, and community trust policies aimed at complying with the Constitution and making communities safer. H.R. 3004 would expand the Federal Government’s ability to prosecute people for illegal reentry into the U.S., excludes humanitarian exemptions for people fleeing violence, and heightens penalties in those cases.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice, an affiliation of five civil rights organizations, issues the following statement in response:

“Asian Americans Advancing Justice strongly opposes H.R. 3003 (the No Sanctuary for Criminals Act), H.R. 3004 (known as Kate’s Law), and the passage of any immigration enforcement legislation that would increase indiscriminate enforcement, further the criminalization of immigrants, and instill more fear in already terrified communities. Approximately 40 percent of all immigrants come to the U.S. from Asia, and 1.6 million of those immigrants are undocumented. Anti-immigrant policies create a climate of fear for all immigrants, regardless of status.

We are horrified and dismayed that House leadership has chosen to line up behind the administration in its scapegoating of immigrants. Both of these bills further the administration’s goals of criminalizing all immigrants and expanding mass incarceration. Since the administration failed in its attempt to strip funding from municipalities with sanctuary and community trust policies in federal court, it is looking for Congress to fulfill its anti-immigrant agenda.

There is abundant evidence that sanctuary and community trust policies make communities safer. As Arizona and Texas have shown us, forcing local law enforcement to enforce immigration laws increases racial profiling and distrust of law enforcement by communities of color.

Rapidly pushing these bills through the House as America looks toward a holiday that celebrates the best of our American ideals is clearly an effort to slide this legislation under the radar of anyone who would oppose it, including millions of Americans who support immigrants’ rights.

Vilifying and punishing immigrants who may be fleeing violence or seeking a better life for their families does not make us safer, just inhumane. We call on Congress to reject this latest anti-immigrant strategy. This vote will be a test for Members of Congress to show which side of justice they are on.”
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees ("Asian Americans") in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation. We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice. Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org.