Immigrant Advocates Oppose “Adios Amazon” Bills

Anti-immigrant legislation could spell goodbye to Georgia’s dream of HQ2

Atlanta, GA, January 24, 2018 — Atlanta, GA - ACLU of Georgia, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta, CAIR Georgia, Coalition of Refugee Service Agencies (CRSA), and GALEO will host a press conference on Thursday, January 25, to discuss how legislation currently being considered in the Georgia legislature could have long-lasting repercussions for Georgia’s economy.

What: Press Conference by ACLU of Georgia, Advancing Justice-Atlanta, CAIR GA, CRSA, and GALEO

Time: 10:30 am, January 25, 2018

Location: Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Room 514

Speakers:

Various state representatives

Aisha Yaqoob, Policy Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Stephanie Jackson Ali, Policy Chair, Coalition of Refugee Service Agencies

Murtaza Khwaja, Staff Attorney, CAIR Georgia

Chris Bruce, Policy Counsel, ACLU of Georgia

Maria Palacios, Policy Analyst & Leadership Program Coordinator, GALEO

Proposed legislation including H.B. 66, S.B. 161, and S.R. 587 would directly target Georgia’s immigrant community members. H.B. 66 imposes a fee, or tax, on money transmission transactions for individuals. This bill, if enacted, would levy a tax of $10 (or 2% of the total transfer amount for transactions above $500) on money transfers outside the State of Georgia. Additionally, S.B. 161, differentiates between citizen and noncitizen licenses by changing the orientation: citizen cards will be horizontal, and noncitizen cards will be vertical.

Lastly, S.R. 587, would make English the official language of the state and require all state officers and agencies to conduct official business and communication in English only.

Immigrant rights advocates suggest these bills echo the anti-immigrant sentiment that has come out of the legislature for the past many years. In addition, they worry that these bills could cause Amazon, which recently placed Atlanta on the shortlist for the location of its second worldwide headquarters, to reconsider the state as a choice open and welcoming for their international workforce. Furthermore, these bills would place additional burdens on immigrant-owned small businesses and families.

A January 2017 article in the Seattle Times, stated that over 40% of the tech workforce in Seattle – the site of Amazon’s current headquarters - is foreign-born, populations that would be directly affected by anti-welcoming
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta is the first and only legal advocacy nonprofit dedicated to the civil rights of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders in Georgia and the Southeast. We work in four major program areas: public policy; legal education and support; civic engagement; and defense of rights FOR Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and other underserved communities. You can read more about us at www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org

**About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta**

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](http://www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org).