VOTING RIGHTS ADVOCATES LAUNCH DEAR GEORGIA, IT'S TIME CAMPAIGN

Demand Safe, Secure and Accessible November Election

Atlanta, GA, September 18, 2020 — Today, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta, together with All Voting Is Local, and over 30 state and community organizations launched the #DearGeorgia, It’s Time campaign to demand Governor Brian Kemp, Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, the State Board of Elections, and county election officials guarantee a safe, secure, and accessible November election.

This campaign comes at a critical time. As Georgia grapples with almost 300,000 COVID-19 cases, there are mounting election concerns about health risks, postal delays, long lines, and misinformation. Voters who are essential workers, caregivers, educators, and parents have added challenges balancing jobs, family, and shifting schedules.

Georgia’s elections officials can take common sense measures to alleviate voting challenges on Election Day. Election leaders should mail all registered Georgia voters absentee ballot applications and critical voting information in English and Spanish. In Georgia 44% of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) speak limited English. In 2018, the gubernatorial election was decided on a margin of 55,000 votes.

In our 2020 election, where every vote counts, we need to ensure each and everyone of the 238,000 eligible AAPI voters is given a fair opportunity to participate. To ensure all voters are able to vote in a language they understand, voting materials should also be provided in Bengali, Chinese, Korean, Hindi, Vietnamese and Urdu in areas with large limited English speaking AAPI communities.

“We’re calling directly upon Georgians to join us in a letter writing campaign demanding safe and secure elections this fall,” said Stephanie Cho, Executive Director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta. “All Georgia voters must have a voice in shaping our state’s future. The #DearGeorgia, It’s Time campaign aims to ensure that every vote counts, centering Georgians who speak other languages, work essential jobs, face elevated health risks, and live with disabilities. Georgia has a proud tradition of advancing civil rights, and the fight for these essential community members is today’s struggle to advance justice for all.”

Based on the recommendation of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security COVID workgroup, the #DearGeorgia, It’s Time campaign asks election officials to make available at least one absentee ballot dropbox for every 15,000 voters and ensure at least one dropbox is available in every county. Dropboxes provide voters a safe and secure way to maintain physical distancing and return their ballots, and can help election officials receive ballots earlier and in a more organized way.

"Georgians must be able to vote safely, conveniently, and in the language they speak,” said Aklima Khondoker, Georgia state director for All Voting is Local. “We’re excited to work with Advancing Justice to not only advocate for additional ballot drop boxes in every county, but for ballot applications in languages that voters speak, so that more voters can equitably access the ballot."

We invite all Georgians to write letters to Governor Brian Kemp, Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, the
State Board of Elections, and their respective county election accessible manner. To learn more please visit www.DearGeorgia.vote.

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.