Press Conference Monday, March 3rd at 1:15 pm at Georgia Capitol to Celebrate the Defeat of S.R. 1031, S.B. 404 and Call for an End to Anti-immigrant legislation

Atlanta, GA, January 25, 2014 — Both proposed policies targeting immigrants and refugees -- Senate Resolution 1031 and Senate Bill 404 -- have failed to move forward in the Georgia legislature. The Asian American Legal Advocacy Center (AALAC) along with elected officials and a multi-racial, multi-ethnic coalition of partners, is holding a press conference to celebrate the early defeat of these two policies, call for an end to all anti-immigrant legislation and encourage federal immigration reform. The press conference is being held at the Rotunda inside the Georgia Capitol on Monday, March 3rd starting at 1:15 pm. Please note that Governor Deal will be speaking after our press conference at 2:00 pm.

Senate Resolution 1031 is an English-only resolution which required among other things that Georgia driver license exams be given only in English and amend Georgia’s Constitution to declare English the state’s official language. Senate Bill 404 proposed to eliminate Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) youth from their right to obtain a Georgia driver license. Both proposed policies failed to be called by the Senate Rules Committee which is required before they can receive a full floor vote on Monday, or “cross-over” day for the Georgia legislature. Bills must receive a floor vote in either the House or Senate before cross-over day to have a chance at passing this legislative session.

Following the press conference, AALAC will present a small thank-you cookie to Governor Deal and deliver cookies to all Senators with a message of thanks and encouragement to keep Georgia a welcoming state for immigrant and refugee Americans.

“By now we should have learned how to be a truly welcoming state, which appreciates and salutes our diversity, rather than wasting time and resources on targeting specific groups with obstacles to their inclusion and assimilation,” said Rich Pelligrino with Cobb United for Change Coalition.

“As the director of an organization that serves the refugee and immigrant community in Georgia, I believe that this legislation sends the wrong message about Georgia being a welcoming community. It would have a negative impact on the economic self-sufficiency of the hardworking families we serve as well as on the economic well-being of the communities in which these families live and contribute,” said Paedia Mixon, Executive Director of RRISA.

"Political games and racism won't prevail, immigrants will keep fighting back to defeat unjust laws to make sure that the Jim Crow era won't come back," said America Gruner President of Coalition of Latino Leaders in Dalton.

"We recognize there has been a slow but noticeable shift in our Georgia Legislature where more elected officials are realizing that immigrants and refugees are a positive to our state. We want to thank them for their leadership and push for a permanent end to anti-immigrant state legislation," said Helen Kim Ho, AALAC’s Executive Director.

We ENCOURAGE media and members of the public to attend.
WHAT: AALAC Press Conference

WHERE: The Rotunda, Georgia State Capitol, 206 Washington St SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30334.

WHEN: 1:15 pm. to 2:00 (press conference); Cookie delivery to Governor and Senators (2:00 to 3:00)

PARKING: Paid parking available around the Capitol. Click here for options.

SPEAKERS INCLUDE: -Helen Kim Ho, Executive Director, Asian American Legal Advocacy Center, Inc. -Jeffrey Tapia, CEO of the Latin American Association -Andy Kim, President of the Korea Southeast U.S. Chamber of Commerce -Glory Kilanko, Women Watch Afrika Inc. -Helen Butler, Executive Director, Coalition for the People's Agenda -Representative Pedro Marin, House District 96 (Duluth) -Ted Terry, Mayor of the City of Clarkston -Representative BJ Pak, House District 108 (Lilburn) -- invited

QUESTIONS: Contact Helen Ho at 404-232-5219 or Alice Kim at 678-612-4993

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.