Call to Action

Crossover Day at the Georgia Capitol

Atlanta, GA, March 10, 2015 — Crossover Day at the Georgia Capitol is this Friday and we need your help. Here's how it works in a nutshell: proposed bills that do not pass out of at least one chamber (either the Senate or House) by Crossover Day have no chance of becoming law this year. So this is the week to get involved!

Advancing Justice - Atlanta is committed to designing policy rooted in the South, focused on our core issue areas of voting rights, immigration and education. Out of the various bills we are monitoring that support or conflict with our 2015 Policy Agenda, there are four bills we believe have the chance of passing out of one chamber in time -- but we need your participation! Please read below for the latest update on these bills and how you can get involved. Thanks!

#1. Yes to House Bill 131, The End of Cyberbullying Act

Above: Viral video of a Sikh middle school student in Gwinnett County GA being called a 'terrorist' on his bus.

Advancing Justice - Atlanta has been in the forefront of advocating for stronger anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying policies for years and support House Bill 131 sponsored by Representative Pamela Dickerson. Asian American students are being bullied more, and cyberbullied more often, than every other major race group according to a Department of Education survey. Immigrant children are the fastest growing group in K-12 schools, and in a county like Gwinnett where a full 11%+ of its residents are Asian and 57%+ of its residents are people of color, we must do everything we can to protect Asian American children against race-hate speech and the serious and harmful effects of bullying and cyberbullying.

We urge you to call members of the House Rules Committee and ask them to schedule HB 131 for a Floor Vote this week! The list of House Rules Committee members can be found here: http://www.house.ga.gov/COMMITTEES/en-US/committee.aspx?Committee=109&Session=24.

#2. No to House Bill 194, Limiting Early Voting

Advancing Justice - Atlanta staff Jessica Frankel participates in this week's Moral Monday event focused on HB 194.

There were many proposed bills this session that supported greater voting access; unfortunately, none of the pro-voting rights bills gained momentum. But we have seen traction with House Bill 194 which seeks to decrease the number of early voting days in Georgia. More voting days means more convenience, greater flexibility and access for Georgians to exercise their right to vote -- and studies have shown that early voting most benefits minorities and the working poor. We need the most diverse involvement of our electorate to ensure the best possible outcomes for our state!

Please contact your House Rep now and ask them to vote NO to House Bill 194 because it will hurt, not help, more Asian Americans from voting in Georgia. To find your House Rep click here: http://www.house.ga.gov/Representatives/en-US/HouseMembersList.aspx.
#3. Keep Senate Bill 6 the Anti-DACA Bill Dead in the Senate

Senate Bill 6 proposes to deprive current and future recipients of deferred action (DACA and DAPA) from keeping and obtaining a Georgia driver license. Similar to the English-only driver license bill SB 6 is a red herring: SB 6 will do nothing to solve the immigration issue but will simply increase the number of uninsured drivers on the road, which decreases road safety and increases costs for insured drivers.

While this bill has not gained much traction this session thanks to strong bipartisan leadership at our Capitol and the multi-year efforts of groups like Advancing Justice - Atlanta and others, there are strong anti-immigrant lobbying forces still working hard for its passage. So please call members of the Public Safety Committee and urge them to not call the bill to a vote. To get the list of Senate Public Safety Committee members, click here: http://www.senate.ga.gov/committees/en-US/Committee.aspx?Committee=81&Session=24.

#4. Say No To Senate Bill 129, Say No to Religious and LGBT Discrimination!

Senate Bill 129 called the "Georgia Religious Freedom Restoration Act" has passed in the Senate and will now go to the House for a possible vote. We oppose the Religious Freedom aka Marriage Inequality and Discrimination bill in Georgia. This bill would expose just about anyone -- but especially our LGBT family and friends, and women seeking healthcare -- from receiving equal service and treatment.

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.