Asian Americans Advancing Justice Condemns Executive Orders on Immigration

Calls for Cities and Law Enforcement to Stand Against Threat to Sanctuary Cities

NORCROSS, GA, January 25, 2017 — The new administration announced today the signing of several inhumane and draconian executive orders intended to endanger immigrants and create fear in immigrant communities. The executive orders include a promise to withhold federal funding to sanctuary cities, greatly increase the number of immigration enforcement officers and border patrol officers, resurrect the controversial Secure Communities program, create new deportation priorities, and to increase detention—including children and families—at the border.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice (Advancing Justice), an affiliation of five civil rights organizations, released a statement regarding the administration’s announcement.

Advancing Justice is outraged by these targeted attacks on our communities that seek to scapegoat and marginalize immigrants, refugees, Muslim Americans and other communities of color. These harmful policies will waste billions of dollars, cause harm in communities across the country, and undermine our American values of liberty, due process, and equality.

Among the many disturbing policy changes, we note that the attacks on sanctuary cities seek to enforce the will of a minority of Americans on democratically elected state and local officials. States and localities have a legal right under the U.S. Constitution to adopt policies that welcome immigrants and refugees and ensure equal access to vital services. The administration’s action is a direct attack on the policies of more than 360 counties and cities that have policies seeking to disentangle local law enforcement from immigration enforcement and encourage vibrant immigrant communities that make our country strong.

The executive orders are aimed at creating fear in our immigrant communities, including fear of local police, which will undermine community policing efforts by eroding trust in local law enforcement. It also will encourage racial profiling by law enforcement, subjecting anyone who “looks like an immigrant” to being targeted by police. Advancing Justice will resist these executive orders and all policies and practices that profile, target, and criminalize people of color, immigrants, refugees, and religious minorities.

Moreover, Asian Americans Advancing Justice warns that the new administration’s executive order will be used to coerce local law enforcement to violate the Constitution. Federal courts have held that immigration detainer requests violate the Fourth Amendment’s prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure because they are not based on a finding of probable cause and signed by a judge. Federal funding cannot be conditioned on requiring state or localities to violate Constitutional rights.

We are deeply troubled by the direction of our country and this Administration’s apparent desire to appease the President’s anti-immigrant and white supremacist supporters. President Trump lost the popular vote; further, Asian American voters overwhelmingly did not vote for Trump. His election did not give him a mandate on immigration. As we saw this past weekend during the largest one-day protest in this nation’s history, the majority of Americans are with us in welcoming immigrants and refugees and oppose the targeting of Muslims or
people based on their national origin and harsh immigration enforcement policies.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice will use every means necessary to defend sanctuary cities and oppose these shameful executive orders.

**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).