Asian Americans Advancing Justice Condemns Passage of Texas Anti-Immigrant Senate Bill 4

Atlanta, GA, May 10, 2017 — On Sunday May 7, 2017, Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed SB 4, which strips local communities of their power to set local law enforcement policies regarding the treatment of immigrants and mandates that Texas local law enforcement agencies respond to unconstitutional immigration detainer requests. SB 4 allows local law enforcement to ask individuals who are lawfully detained (even for a traffic stop) about their immigration status. Essentially, SB 4 requires Texans to “show their papers.”

Asian Americans Advancing Justice (Advancing Justice), a national affiliation of five civil rights organizations, released the following statement:

“Immigrants are a part of the social fabric of Texas; one in six Texans are immigrants. We condemn the passage of this anti-immigrant law that creates fear in immigrant communities. Notably, when states allow law enforcement to act like immigration agents, public safety is imperiled. In an op-ed, Houston Police Chief Acevedo and the Executive Director of the Texas Police Chief Association stated that, “SB 4 will make the communities more dangerous for all.” In addition, by requiring that local law enforcement hold community members based on U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainers, which federal courts have found are not warrants based on probable cause or signed by a judge, SB 4 violates Constitutional Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable search and seizure.

As a civil rights organization, Advancing Justice condemns the passage of SB 4 as it violates basic Constitutional rights and will put the safety and well being of Texans at risk. Governor Abbott and the Texas State Legislature chose to double-down on the Trump Administration’s deportation machine rather than prioritize the wellbeing of their state. We have seen the devastation similar legislation has caused in Arizona and Alabama. These failed attempts should have been a warning to Texas’ state government, who instead chose to ignore the opinions and concerns of local law enforcement and communities throughout the state. Immigrant communities and all Texans should not have to suffer because of bad public policy.

The economic and social ramifications of SB 4 will create more obstacles for Texans to Affillive their daily lives and thrive. Furthermore, the decision of Governor Abbott to sign SB 4 into law indicates that they do not value the immense contributions immigrants have made to Texas.

We stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Texas fighting this immoral, legally suspect, and dangerous law. We know this law is on the wrong side of history and will hurt Texas in the long run. We will work with our partners to fight for the rights of all communities.”

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.