



## **national asian pacific american women's forum**

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### **NAPAWF Condemns White House Immigration Proposal as Anti-Family, Unjust, and Unworkable**

Washington, DC – Over the past few weeks, the White House has been secretly developing a set of immigration principles with Republican Members of Congress who are most opposed to comprehensive immigration reform. The principles, revealed last week, fail to adequately address the inherent barriers and problems that lead to undocumented immigration, and undermine the ability of immigrants to reunite with their families, establish roots in the U.S., and become full members of their communities.

“The White House principles are unjust and unworkable,” said Kiran Ahuja, NAPAWF Executive Director. “Less than a month ago, Representatives Gutierrez and Flake introduced bipartisan comprehensive legislation that, among other things, provides a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and attempts to eliminate the family backlog. The bill presents an opportunity to begin serious conversations about fixing our broken immigration system. By contrast, the White House proposal is anti-immigrant, anti-family, and partisan.”

Concerned with “chain migration,” the White House proposal would transform the family-based visa system by virtually eliminating all categories of family visas for sons and daughters over the age of 21, as well as brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens. In addition, the proposal would restrict the ability of U.S. citizens to petition their parents. “Family reunification is a central component of any immigration reform policy,” said Ahuja. “Over 1.5 million Asian Pacific Islanders (API) are currently waiting to join their families in the U.S., many of whom have been stuck in the family backlog for over 10 years. The White House proposal fails to address this backlog.”

Additional provisions in the White House proposal include a temporary worker program for new immigrants and a temporary visa program for undocumented immigrants currently residing in the U.S. Neither program, however, is workable. The new temporary worker program fails to provide workplace protection and a path to citizenship, and prohibits immigrants from bringing their spouses and children with them. Similarly, undocumented immigrants in the temporary visa program cannot petition for their relatives, may not receive any public benefits other than emergency care, and will be required to pay \$3,500 every three years to obtain a new visa and an additional \$10,000 fine if he/she wishes to apply for permanent residence.

“Our communities will not accept proposals that make it nearly impossible for immigrants to become citizens, lawful permanent residents, or reunite with their families and communities. On April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>, we will join hundreds of other API organizations and communities in Washington, D.C. to demand immigration policies that are truly comprehensive, genuine, and just,” said Ahuja.

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NAPAWF is the only national multi-issue organization dedicated to forging a progressive movement for social and economic justice and the political empowerment of Asian and Pacific American women and girls. NAPAWF unites our diverse communities through organizing, education and advocacy.