

April 5, 2023

Dear Governor Abbott, Lt. Governor Patrick, Texas State Senate, and Texas State House,

As concerned community and professional organizations in Texas and across the nation, we write to express our concern and opposition to the bills currently pending before the Texas legislature that target and restrict the rights of hard-working immigrants, create fear and concern amongst Texan business owners and families, and promote the impression that Texas is not a welcoming place for immigrants and their investments.

We are particularly concerned with the impact of SB 147, including as amended, and the message that it sends along with other bills of a similar nature, including SB 711, SB 552, and HB 4736. These bills restrict the ability of immigrants from engaging in basic liberties such as purchasing homes, growing their businesses, and pursuing higher education.

Under the guise of addressing national security concerns, instead, these bills ultimately target and harm (whether intentionally or not) communities composed of hard-working immigrants, refugees, and citizens on the basis of national origin. Some of these bills, such as SB 147, as amended, expressly single out and omit protections for all immigrants and visa-holders from China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia, while others are drafted in a way that would restrict the rights of dual-citizens, refugees, and others from around the world.

We are deeply concerned that Asian, Iranian, Russian, and other communities are being singled out and denied the ability to do what every other similarly situated individual in America has the right to do: build a life and put down roots in the place that they call home. These bills, if enacted, would create additional barriers based exclusively on a person's ancestry or country of origin, all in contravention of the rights afforded to them under federal law.

The combined effect of these bills is an ugly reminder of dark and rejected parts of American history, when communities were targeted by discriminatory laws based on their ancestry. These bills echo the Alien Land Laws of the early 20th century that prevented Asians from owning land in states across the country, and more recent policies like the Muslim Ban, which separated immigrants and refugees on the basis of their religion and national origin from their families and prevented students from contributing to the strength of the United States.

We are deeply concerned that Texas may repeat these mistakes and make itself unwelcoming to the many immigrants, Asian Americans, Iranian Americans, and other diverse communities that call the state home. As a model for many in the country and out of a duty to those who call, or will call, Texas home, you have a responsibility to carefully consider the impact of introducing or supporting discriminatory legislation like SB 147 and these other bills.

We strongly urge you to oppose SB 147, as amended, and other bills that discriminate against individuals and families based on their national origin or ancestry. We encourage you to meet with potentially impacted community members, including our organizations, and speak out against all bills that end up targeting and harming the individuals and communities that make Texas and our country stronger.

Sincerely,

United Chinese Americans (UCA)
RISE AAPI - Texas
Armenian American Action Network (AAAN)
Asians Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Dallas Asian American Bar Association (DAABA)
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)
National Iranian American Council (NIAC)
DFW Chinese Alliance
Austin Chinese-American Network (ACAN)
Chinese Civic Center (CCC)
Sino Professionals Association (SPA)
United Association of Chinese Alumni in Houston (UACA Houston)
Asian Chamber of Texas
Asian Texans for Justice
APA Justice Task Force
Asian Americans Leadership Council (AALC)
Asia Pacific Islander American Public Affairs (APAPA - ATC)
Asia Pacific Islander American Public Affairs (APAPA - TX)
American Shanxi Development Association
Chinese Association of Professionals in Science and Technology (CAPST)
Emgage
Heyuan Association in North America
Hunan University Alumni Association of North America
JACL Houston Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)
National Council of Chinese Americans (NCCA)
SIAUSA NET
Palestinian Youth Movement
Tsuru for Solidarity
Access Education RRISD
Asian American Advancing Leadership
Austin Asian American Civic Coalition
Austin Chinese Engineers Society
Austin Great Wall Chinese School

Austin Guangxi Association
Beijing native association
Blue Legend Artistic Swimming
BUPT Dallas Alumni Association
Chinese American Consumer Association
Chinese American Manufacturers Alliance
Chinese Society of Austin
Chinese Society of Austin & Hakka Association
Dallas Asian American Bar Association
DFW AnHuai Associations
DFW Fujian Alliance of Dallas/Fort Worth
DFW Sichuan-Chongqing Association
Fujian Association Of South U.S.A
Henan Fellowship Association of Southern USA
Houston Guangxi Association
Houston HuaZhong University of Science and Technology Alumni Association
HUCC
Hunan Association of Austin
Love Action Foundation
NAKASEC Action Fund Texas
Network of Asian American Organizations in Austin
North Texas APAPA
OCA DFW Chapter
Register2Vote
Savannah Chinese Heritage Group
Shandong Fellowship Association of Dallas
Shandong Fellowship Association of Southern USA
Southern America IT Association
St. Stephen's Episcopal School
Sun Yat-Sen University Alumni Association in South US
Texas Capital News
Texas Northeast Chinese association
Texas Tech Asian Pacific American Law Student Association
Woori Juntos
18Million Rising
Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance
Dayton Chapter Japanese American Citizens League
Elmahaba Center
Islamophobia Studies Center
JACL Chicago
MPower Change Action Fund
Muslims For Just Futures
North Carolina Asian Americans Together

Project South
South Asian Network
Greater Memphis United Chinese Association
Northern California Alumni Association of National Taiwan Ocean University
One book One world-Michigan
Peking University Alumni Association of Washington State
Tennessee Chinese American Alliance
Aoxiang US Realty
C&S Trading, Inc
Cantontropicals LLC
Daytown Realty
G&S construction group
Golden wok
J C Business Group
JAYTON Property LLC
JumboWise Capital LLC
Merry Media
Miracle Mart
Oak Shield Service
OneStop Machinery Solut
Paradise Road Financials, LLC
Pepper Twins
Real International
Seesaw Group LLC
Sunet Group
Sunstone investments, LLC
Teckleap LLC
Tennington investments
Texas internal pipe coating LLC
The village at twin creek Chinese association
Tsinghua Alumni Academia Club of North America
UT Ex Hong Kong WhatsApp Group
Wuye LLC
Yeung Smiles
Z Music & Media LLC
Telfair Chinese Association
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta
South Asian Bar Association of Austin
Council of American Islamic Relations, Houston Chapter
ICNA Council for Social Justice
AAPI Victory Alliance
JACL DC Chapter
Indian American Impact
SDJACL
JACL Seabrook Chapter
San Francisco Chapter Japanese American Citizens League

Seattle Chapter Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)
San Fernando Valley Japanese American Citizens League (SFV JACL)
Japanese American Citizens League, Florin-Sacramento Valley Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League Pacific Southwest District
Japanese American Citizens League - Arizona
Boise Valley JACL
Puyallup Valley Chapter of JACL
North Texas APAPA
OCA-Greater Houston
One APiA Texas
ACDC Texas
#StrongMuslimah
Sanger JACL Chapter
Sonoma County Japanese American Citizens League
Japanese American Citizens League, Santa Clara Chapter
CECS
Northern California Western Nevada Pacific District Japanese American Citizens League
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates
Japanese American Citizens League, Twin Cities Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League NCWNPD Civil Rights Committee
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs
Austin Asian American Bar Association
Portland JACL
Eden Township JACL Chapter
New American Leaders Action Fund
National Immigration Law Center
Chinese for Affirmative Action