

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Chair, U.S. House Judiciary Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chair, Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship, U.S. House Judiciary Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

[VIA EMAIL]

December 8th, 2020

Dear Chair Nadler and Chair Lofgren,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to express our opposition to the xenophobic language that was added in Sec. 9 of the Senate-passed version of the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act, banning many Chinese nationals from becoming lawful permanent residents and eventually citizens in the U.S. We urge you to strip this new Chinese Exclusion Act language from the bill.

Every year tens of thousands of lawful permanent residents of Chinese descent adjust their status to become lawful permanent residents and some time after that most become naturalized citizens. This provision, if interpreted broadly, could impact most of these US residents. There are many ways that a Chinese person who lived in China for a good portion of their life could have an affiliation with the military of the People's Republic of China. For example, people who attend university in China attend required military training. Such affiliation does not make an immigrant guilty or even likely to commit espionage. This language is unnecessary. Immigration and naturalization applications already ask immigrants to disclose their relationships with foreign governments and militaries. Therefore, this legislative text is unnecessary and intended to equate the Chinese immigrants with the government of the People's Republic of China.

We understand that the exclusionary language was added at the request of President Trump as part of his campaign to scapegoat Asian Americans and immigrants of Chinese descent by equating them with the Communist Party of China. Asian Americans are facing the repercussions of the attacks by President Trump on multiple fronts. The President has repeatedly blamed China for the COVID-19 pandemic coinciding with a rise in hate incidents against Asian Americans.¹ The US

¹ [Stand Against Hatred](#), a website launched by the Asian Americans Advancing Justice Affiliation to capture individual reports of hate crimes and hate incidents, has received most of its reports since late February, 2020, all involving harassment and discrimination connected to COVID-19, including bullying, racial epithets, and verbal harassment.

government has also engaged in mass targeting and prosecutions of Asian American scientists and researchers of Chinese descent.²

In this context, this legislation racially scapegoating and equating people of Chinese origin or descent to the Chinese government is harmful and reminiscent of the Chinese Exclusion Act. We urge you to strip the language out of the Fairness for High Skilled Immigrants Act.

Please note that some of the undersigned organizations oppose the underlying bill and will continue to oppose the bill even if Sec. 9 is removed, while others have taken no position on the underlying bill.

Sincerely,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
AASCSC Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center, Inc
American Immigration Lawyers Association
APA Justice
Asian American Federation of Florida South Region
Asian Americans United
Asian Law Alliance
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Center for Disability Rights
Christian Reformed Church, Office of Social Justice
Church World Service
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Defending Rights & Dissent
Emgage Texas
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Equality North Carolina
Florida Asian Services
Florida Asian Women Alliance
Freedom Network USA
Immigration Hub
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
A Little Piece Of Light
Montgomery County Civil Rights Coalition
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center

² Under the Department of Justice's "[China Initiative](#)", Asian American researchers and scientists have been targeted and placed under increasing scrutiny for the purported purpose of combating economic espionage.

National Iranian American Council Action
OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates
OCA Asian Pacific Advocates – FC
OCA Asian Pacific Advocates - Greater Chicago
OCA Asian Pacific Advocates - Greater Houston
OCA Asian Pacific Advocates - Greater Seattle
OCA Asian Pacific Advocates - Silicon Valley Chapter
OCA Asian Pacific Advocates - South Florida Chapter
Ohio Asian American Health Coalition
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist Leadership in Ohio
Orange County Chinese Cultural Club
Poder Latinx
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
SPLC Action Fund
UndocuBlack Network
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center