



Immigration Policy Reform Values and Goals

Asians and Pacific Islanders (APIs) constitute 27.7 percent of the country's immigrant population and are the fastest growing racial group in the nation. Over 750,000 aspiring citizens living in the shadows are API women.

NAPAWF knows it is not about what you look like or where you were born, but how you live your life and what you do that defines you here in America. The contributions of women— mothers, sisters, daughters and coworkers— have always been vital for our society to grow and flourish. We know our country is strongest when women are healthy, safe, and able to care for their children and families. Truly effective immigration policy reform should value and honor women and their contributions.

To ensure how we treat API women upholds our commitment to freedom and justice for all, and that they can fully contribute to the United States, NAPAWF's core goals in immigration policy reform are:

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| ✧ | A ROAD TO CITIZENSHIP | ✧ | HEALTH EQUITY |
| ✧ | FAMILY UNITY | ✧ | FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE |

ROAD TO CITIZENSHIP: We need an immigration process that makes citizenship accessible for women. For immigrant women, there are excessive barriers to accessing citizenship. These include extremely long wait periods, high fees, and onerous employment requirements that do not account for the majority of immigrant women whose work is informal and often unverifiable – such as work in the domestic care sector, various core service professions, and in the home caring for their own children and families. Additionally, to ensure women can care for their families in the best way possible, immigrants brought here as children should be given immediate access to citizenship. NAPAWF supports immigration policy that ensures:

- **A roadmap to citizenship that is affordable and timely**
- **Support for navigating the immigration processes, including language learning**
- **Immediate access to citizenship for DREAMers**
- **Recognition of women's work and women workers**

FAMILY UNITY: We believe that families belong together. Women, seventy percent of whom attain legal status through family, are disproportionately affected by backlogs in the family immigration system – forced to wait decades to be reunited with their families. Nearly half of the 4 million people stuck in this backlogged system are APIs. Furthermore, we are tearing women from their children and spouses through costly immigration policies, putting into practice laws that undermine our values. Additionally, same-sex couples must be allowed to sponsor their partners and children. NAPAWF supports immigration policy reform that:

- **Increases the family-based visa quota and eliminates backlogs**
- **Protects parental rights, expands access to counsel and decreases detention**
- **Ends enforcement-only laws such as 287g and Secure Communities**
- **Honors the love and commitment of all families**

HEALTH EQUITY: In 2014, the barrier between accessible health care for immigrants and those who qualify for the new health coverage options will increase. Immigration status will become the key determinant of life, death, and health – affecting whether a woman can buy health insurance, take her sick child to see a doctor, and get the basic reproductive health services she needs. Fixing our broken immigration system needs to make America a better, healthier nation for everyone. That means making sure everyone benefits from new access to affordable care. Barriers to health do not make moral or economic sense because we all pay the price when people do not have access to affordable health care or routine preventive care. NAPAWF supports immigration policy that:

- **Removes the five year ban on new immigrant access to public health benefits**
- **Includes people eligible for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in all parts of the Affordable Care Act (ACA)**
- **Allows immigrants to purchase insurance through the new state health exchanges**

FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE: Ineffective immigration laws allow human traffickers to exploit women who are desperate to be reunited with their families. Many survivors of violence are forced to stay silent in dangerous situations due to dependency on the sponsorship of an abusive spouse or employer, or fear that engaging with service providers or local police could lead to deportation. Two-thirds of immigrant women in the employment visa category enter as dependents on their spouse's visa, with no ability to work themselves. This prevents these women from contributing their skills to the country and makes them vulnerable to an abusive partner. Immigrant women also disproportionately suffer from sexual harassment and other exploitative conditions in the workplace. NAPAWF supports immigration policy reform that:

- **Expedites current family-based sponsorships**
- **Expands protections and relief for asylum seekers and survivors of trafficking**
- **Increases the number of U-visas for survivors of domestic and sexual violence**
- **Supports women's independence by recognizing their work in employment categories**
- **Protects immigrant women workers on the job**

Women especially know the importance of coming together, and we would not be where we are without the help and support of the women in our lives. We therefore have a unique commitment to giving equal opportunities and respect to women in immigration policy reform. Through making citizenship accessible for all immigrants, keeping families together, ensuring immigrant women and their families have equal access to health benefits, and protecting immigrant women from violence, we can help make sure our communities and our country are at their strongest and best.

NAPAWF is the only national, multi-issue Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women's organization in the nation. Our mission is to build a movement to advance social justice and human rights for AAPI women and girls.