2024 Policy Platform

Civil Rights

Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders face bias and discrimination in the workplace, at the polls, in our neighborhoods, in schools, and within the political process. AAs and NHPIs are often perceived as "perpetual foreigners," and many of us are also targeted due to our actual or perceived race, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or immigration status. This highlights the importance of intersectional policies that acknowledge the differences in our lived experiences.

Hate crimes and hate incidents – in particular, hateful rhetoric against Asian Americans – have also risen in recent years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical events abroad.

Safeguard Democracy and Uphold the Integrity of the Election System

- Ensure that Congress appropriates funding to the fullest extent possible for Election Security grants made available through the Help America Vote Act (HAVA).
- Pass legislation to enhance the ability of election officials to defend against partisan efforts to remove them from office, and increase protections against intimidation for election workers.

Protect Voting Rights

- Restore and modernize the Voting Rights Act, which was undermined by the Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* in 2013.

- Promote access to ballot language assistance for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – including full enforcement of Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act, which requires language assistance in certain jurisdictions; and Section 208 of the Voting Rights Act, which allows LEP voters to bring in a person of their choice to assist them in the voting booth.
- Combat voter suppression efforts, such as requirements for photo identification and proof of citizenship, and restore voting rights to individuals with a felony conviction.
- Expand online and same-day voter registration and "no excuse" absentee and early voting.

Strengthen LGBTQIA+ Rights

- Amend federal civil rights laws to explicitly include sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, and childbirth as protected characteristics.
- Promote and protect the right of transgender and non-binary youth and adults to receive healthcare, including gender-affirming such as hormone replacement therapy and surgery – which is already available to cis-gender people.
- Promote and protect transgender and non-binary youths' access to hormone blockers and other forms of gender-affirming care.
- Recognize the right of transgender youth to participate in school sports; and to receive the social, educational, leadership development, and physical and mental health benefits of school sport participation.
- Promote protections for LGBTQIA+ individuals to ensure that they are protected against discrimination in school, immigration, housing, employment, and all spheres of life.

Fight Hate Crimes, Harassment, and Discrimination

- Expand and enforce strong anti-hate legislation. Extend hate crime protections to more people based on categories of sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, and immigration status. Expand civil rights protections by updating Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include retail stores, banks, transportation, and other places where discrimination can occur.
- Take steps to improve data collection and data disaggregation on hate, for instance, by passing legislation that requires mandatory reporting to the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), improves civil rights enforcement data nationwide, and supports the reporting of hate incidents to non-law enforcement agencies.
- Invest in community outreach to Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders about hate crimes, bias-based bullying and harassment, and discrimination.

- Increase the availability and accessibility of supportive services for AA and NHPI individuals who experience hate, harassment, and discrimination; provide assistance that is culturally appropriate and in the languages spoken by members of our community.
- Extend immigration protections to victims of hate crimes.

End Profiling and Discrimination on the Basis of Race, Ethnicity, National Origin, and Religion

- Explicitly prohibit profiling by law enforcement, and ban law enforcement-related practices that have a disproportionate impact on individuals based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, religion, or disability. Furthermore, profiling guidance must be updated to eliminate or substantially limit exceptions for border enforcement and national security. These profiling protections must also apply to systems, algorithms, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Large Language Model (LLM) tools, and machines that augment law enforcement and surveillance services.
- Require law enforcement agencies to conduct cultural competency and anti-profiling training, improve government monitoring of their activities with respect to race and other protected classes, and create effective complaint resolution processes.
- Ensure that religion cannot serve as the discriminatory basis for exclusion from entering the United States. For example, imposing more stringent requirements that would prohibit actions similar to the Muslim Ban from being invoked in the future.
- Oppose new disclosure requirements and ensure that federal agencies follow the White House NSPM-33 mandatory anti-discriminatory provision.
- Engage directly with impacted members of the Asian American scholar community, and ensure that due processes are in place both within federal agencies and academic institutions to protect the rights of Asian Americans – particularly those of Chinese descent – who have been subjected to heightened scrutiny as US-China tensions worsen.
- Oppose discriminatory land laws introduced at the state and federal levels, with a specific focus on bills that target individuals based on their national origin, race, ethnicity, or color.

Law Enforcement & Surveillance

- Expand recent DOJ and DHS anti-bias guidelines to fully ban discrimination across all law enforcement activities and surveillance activities. Ensure that these profiling protections also apply to systems, algorithms, AI and LLM tools, and machines that augment law enforcement and surveillance services.

- Require law enforcement agencies to conduct cultural competency and anti-profiling training.
- Monitor law enforcement agency activities to ensure that individuals are not deprived of federally protected rights based on race and other statutes, and create effective complaint resolution processes.
- Ensure that surveillance authorities are not overbroad, overused, and abused to the detriment to vulnerable communities of color. This includes opposing the reauthorization of Sec. 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act without comprehensive reforms, and preventing any future surveillance authorities that lack appropriate checks and balances against prejudice and bias against a person based on their race, ethnicity, national origin or religious background.

Research, Science and Technology

- Prevent the reinstatement of the Department of Justice's defunct "China Initiative" and any future iterations of such programs and policies.
- Oppose new disclosure requirements and ensure that federal agencies follow the White House NSPM-33 mandatory anti-discriminatory provision, engage with the directly impacted Asian American and scholar community, and that due processes are in place both within federal agencies and academic institutions to protect the rights of Asian Americans – particularly those of Chinese descent – who have been subjected to heightened scrutiny as US-China tensions worsen.

Ending Caste Discrimination

- Enact comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that explicitly includes caste as a protected category, ensuring legal remedies and safeguards for victims of caste-based discrimination.
- Promote public awareness and education programs to raise consciousness about caste discrimination in the United States, with a focus on courts, schools, workplaces, and community organizations.
- Develop support services, including counseling and legal aid, for individuals who have experienced caste-based discrimination, ensuring their access to legal recourse and emotional well-being.

Supporting and Securing Reparative Justice

- Pass legislation that would establish a congressional commission to study and develop reparations proposals for African Americans, or have the President sign an executive order to create a commission to study reparative justice.
- Support and pass H.R. 1280, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021, a bold, comprehensive approach to hold police accountable, empower communities, and address systemic racism and bias in law enforcement.

Transnational Repression

- The U.S. government should unwaveringly hold nation-states and their offenders accountable for transnational repression, emphasizing its commitment to justice and human rights, while simultaneously avoiding the characterization of entire communities as national security threats to the United States.
- Develop and support initiatives to counteract online suppression tactics, including promoting digital literacy, assisting affected communities in safeguarding their online presence, and collaborating with international partners to combat internet censorship and cyber threats.

Gun Violence Prevention

- Enforce comprehensive background checks for all firearm purchases to prevent guns from falling into the wrong hands, including individuals with a history of violence, hate, or mental illness.
- Enact Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) at the state level, which enable law enforcement to remove firearms from individuals who pose a danger to themselves or others, based on credible evidence.
- Allocate resources for improved mental health services, support systems, and domestic and community violence prevention efforts to address the underlying causes of gun violence and provide assistance to individuals in crisis.
- Support research on gun violence to better understand its causes and consequences; apply the findings to evidence-based policy decisions and interventions.
- Allow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to adopt a public health approach towards gun violence, with a focus on prevention and community based funding.

- Mandate the federal government to require states to submit data on arrests, mental health adjudications, juvenile records, and other related subjects to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) if those states are unwilling to become full 'point of contact' states. Conduct background checks via state agencies across multiple sources.
- Ensure that state and federal agencies regularly submit to NICS information about any reported ties individuals may have to organizations that promote white supremacy, white nationalism, and/or domestic terrorism.