



2021-2024 Policy Platform -- Policy Proposals to Serve Low-Income AAPIs

Last Updated: November 25, 2020

These policy proposals are presented to provide specific examples of the types of policies that National CAPACD will advocate for under our 2021-2024 Policy Platform. As such, all policy proposals will be consistent with the values, vision, and framework of the 2021-2024 Policy Platform. This document may be updated from time to time.

Our Values and Vision

AAPIs are a diverse and underserved set of communities. Our communities include over 100 languages/dialects spoken and over 50 ethnic groups. Our communities include recent immigrants, refugees, the descendants of immigrants and refugees, and descendants of people who were here long before Europeans set foot on this hemisphere (i.e., Native Hawaiians). With varying educational backgrounds, cultural practices, and huge differences in wealth and poverty, the “AAPI experience” is not singular and is difficult to categorize. And yet, there continues to be a persistent mythology of the economic success of all AAPIs, despite the fact that AAPI communities have significant poverty populations as well as high income individuals. In fact, AAPIs have the highest income inequality of any major racial or ethnic group and have had the fastest growing population of people in poverty of any major racial or ethnic group. Policy makers need to better understand the full range of AAPI experiences and Federal programs need to be more accessible to a broader range of low-income AAPIs.

Crisis Response

Any and all programs to respond to the pandemic (from health programs to small business support to rental assistance) MUST be made available in multiple languages and outreach should be contracted through trusted community-based institutions, such as local, community-based nonprofit organizations.

Further, it is imperative that community institutions -- such as community-based nonprofit organizations -- survive the economic impact of the pandemic. Special attention and resources should be made to ensure that the nonprofit organizations -- large and small, new and old -- that have the language and cultural capacity to serve AAPIs are not lost. If these organizations are not around to serve their communities, it is likely that no one else would.

Beyond the Pandemic

To better serve low-income Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs), we advocate for Federal policy to do the following:

Enact Language and Culture Best Practices: According to the 2018 American Community Survey, there are approximately 5.6 Million AAPIs, age 5 years and older, who are limited english proficient (LEP), or roughly 1/3 of the population of this age group. This is the highest percentage of LEP speakers of any major racial or ethnic group. Similarly, AAPIs have the highest percentage of foreign born persons of any major racial or ethnic group. This means that, for full and fair participation of AAPIs in Federal programs, outreach and programming need to be available in a variety of AAPI languages and delivered in ways that are accessible and culturally appropriate per the following:

- *Translate, Translate, Translate:* All Federal agencies with public-facing programming should require such programming to be available in multiple languages. At a minimum, all Federal programming should meet the Department of Health and Human Services standard where materials are translated whenever a program's constituent base has more than 1,000 speakers of a language or when such speakers make up more than 5% of the service population. Alternatively (i.e., whichever standard results in more languages translated), there should be translations for the top 10 languages spoken by LEP communities, with an additional 2 based upon regional data.
- *Partner with Culturally Competent CBOs:* Whenever possible and appropriate, use local community-based organizations as partners or intermediaries for outreach, program intake, and service delivery. In addition to language skills, AAPI CBOs have cultural knowledge and community connections to be able to reach more people within their communities. In addition, CBOs should be compensated to review and give feedback on agency translated materials.

Enact Data Best Practices: AAPIs are a diverse population where aggregate data across the category is often misleading. Because many metrics show that AAPIs are doing well, the widespread assumption is that *all* AAPIs are doing well. But when the data is disaggregated, a different picture emerges. Therefore, building upon progress made in financial regulatory reform (such as Section 1071 of Dodd-Frank and Regulation C of HMDA), we recommend the following:

- *Disaggregate Data:* All publicly available Federally-produced data should be disaggregated by race, by AAPI ethnic groups, by language spoken, income, and geography.
- *Oversample to Acquire Data on Small Populations:* In areas with identifiable concentrations of specific communities that may have small numbers on a national scale (e.g., there are large numbers of Bhutanese in the Atlanta metropolitan area), agencies should “oversample” in these places in order to get nationally statistically significant data about these smaller populations and to ensure that these communities are better understood and seen.
- *Consult with CBOs:* Community-based nonprofit organizations should be consulted with and made partners in the design and collection of data about their communities.

Build the Capacity of Community-based Organizations: AAPI CBOs know their communities and have the relationships and language and cultural competencies to best deliver services to their communities. However,

many CBOs, especially in communities where needs are growing the fastest, lack the resources and infrastructure to deliver the outcomes that they otherwise would be able to do. Therefore, in order to reach the true diversity of the AAPI community, Federal agencies need to make broad and deep investments into the capacity of local AAPI CBOs. Per the following, these investments should include basic organizational development as well as specific programmatic, technical capacities:

- *Provide Programmatic TA AND Basic Capacity Building:* Any Federal program that provides technical assistance to nonprofit organization subgrantees to fulfill the technical administration of the program should also include resources for capacity building on topics of basic organizational development, including in the maintenance of financial systems, HR systems and practices, organizational management, leadership development, and strategic planning. Even if an organization can fulfill the technical requirements of a specific program at a given point in time, their continued ability to sustain such performance is dependent on their overall organizational stability and development.
- *Invest in Key, Underserved Communities:* AAPI communities which have had a greater proportion of population growth in recent years (i.e., have a higher percentage of more recent arrivals, whether as immigrants, refugees, or via treaty migration) tend to have higher rates of economic need and fewer established community-serving institutions. These communities need basic investment in their social sector infrastructure via their emerging community-based organizations. These emergent CBOs need initial operating support and capacity building.
- *Prioritize Peer to Peer Learning:* Peer to peer learning is an effective and preferred mode of knowledge transmission for many AAPI CBOs. The key is that peer mentor organizations need to be adequately compensated for their time and expertise. Federal TA and capacity building programming should prioritize funding for peer-to-peer models of delivery.

Reform Immigration Policies to be More Equitable and Humane: In recent years, anti-immigrant animus and hate-driven policy-making has made life more difficult for immigrants and refugees. Because AAPIs have the highest percentage of foreign-born people of any racial or ethnic group, immigration policy has a direct impact on the health and well-being of our communities. And, beyond the fate of our communities, these hateful policies have degraded this nation's social fabric and diminished our standing in the world. Therefore, while immigration has not traditionally been one of our core issues, we have been increasingly active within the immigrant policy space. Examples of issues include:

- *Rescind All Recent, Anti-Immigrant Executive Orders and Administrative Rulemaking:* For example, we oppose the Public Charge and Mixed Status rules.
- *End the Cruel and Inhumane Treatment of Immigrants, Asylum Seekers, and Refugees:* We advocate for the end of criminalization and deportation of Southeast Asian refugees. We oppose the ongoing harassment, exclusion, and deportation of South Asians, Muslims, Sikhs, and Arabs. Similarly, we oppose the inhumane treatment of immigrants and asylum seekers at our southern border, including but not limited to the practice of family separation.
- *Comprehensively Reform our Entire Immigration System:* Using the spirit and framework of successful, smaller scale immigration reforms like DACA, we urge a comprehensive reform of our entire immigration system, including the immigration enforcement system. We dream of an immigration system that values the contribution of a wide diversity of immigrants and creates more pathways for more people to be recognized for their contributions.

Target Tailored Resources towards Native Hawaiians: As part of broader movements for redress and justice for indigenous peoples, the Federal Government should allocate resources specifically targeting Native Hawaiians. Policies and principles include:

- *Create Both Set-Asides AND New Programming:* Similar to the creation of the HUD Hawaiian Housing Block Grants, a broader and more comprehensive range of community development and service delivery programs should be designed around the needs of Native Hawaiians. These programs can be created as set-asides within existing programs or as separate, new programming.
- *Partner with Community-Based Organizations:* Federal agencies should work with the Native Hawaiian community and with Native Hawaiian community-based organizations to design expanded programming that delivers resources and services to Native Hawaiians.