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IMMIGRANTS’ RIGHTS ADVOCATES RALLY IN LOS ANGELES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DACA AND DAPA

New Statewide Campaign, Ready California, launched to prepare the almost 1.35 million California immigrants eligible for Executive Action

LOS ANGELES – Advocates for immigrants’ rights held a rally and press conference at the Los Angeles County Supervisors Building today as they launched Ready California, a new statewide campaign to prepare California’s immigrant communities to take full advantage of the executive action programs announced by President Obama in November.

Hundreds of Californians joined speakers including California Secretary of State Alex Padilla, California State Attorney General Chief Deputy Juan Rodriguez, legal service providers, community-based organizations, unions and faith-based organizing groups to mark the day the federal government planned to begin accepting applications for the new administrative relief programs known as the expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA). Together, those programs would allow millions of undocumented individuals to remain in the U.S. without fear of deportation and apply for a work authorization permit for a period of three years with the possibility of renewal.

While the application date for DAPA and expanded DACA are delayed due to pending litigation on appeal in the federal courts, representatives from Ready California are working to ensure immigrant communities across the state are fully prepared to realize the advantages of administrative relief programs once they take effect. Going forward, Ready California will provide online resources as well as workshops, screenings and information sessions to prepare eligible Californians for their applications.

California has more than 1.5 million undocumented individuals eligible for administrative relief, the most of any state in the nation.

Following the rally, Ready California members and supporters outlined the importance of preparing immigrant communities for administrative relief.

Aman Thind, Immigration Project Director at Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA:
"Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA is proud to be a part of Ready California. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, California is home to more than 400,000 undocumented Asian immigrants, many of whom are eligible for the President's administrative relief programs, known as DACA and DAPA. Advancing Justice - LA and many of our partner organizations are preparing and working on linguistically and culturally appropriate outreach to the many Asian immigrants who are eligible to apply. At Advancing Justice - LA, we will continue to offer in-language legal services and weekly DACA workshops for our communities. We are excited to be a part of Ready California - a
building block for meaningful integration of all Californians in our state."

Angelica Salas, Director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)
“May 19 should have been a day of joy and hope for five million immigrants protected under President Obama’s executive action. Instead, political games by Republicans and xenophobia have turned this anniversary that wasn’t into a day of resolve and commitment to fix our broken immigration system. For months we have been preparing for the day when we can help our community apply for DAPA or DACA. At the same time, we have been preparing to hold accountable those whose disdain of our community is keeping us from moving forward. When the times comes, we will be ready to ask: were you there to protect me, my mom, and my dad?"

Arturo Rodriguez, President of the United Farm Workers of America:
“The blockage of the expansion of DACA and DAPA not only hurts immigrant families but all families living in the U.S. because it directly affects those who harvest our fruits and vegetables. If these two would be implemented today, the ten heavily Ag counties in California would make up the fourth largest 'state' to benefit from Obama's executive order. The UFW and UFW Foundation will move forth in preparing the immigrant community for when the President’s executive order for the expansion of DACA and DAPA becomes available.”

Sally Kinoshita, Deputy Director at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center: "After the hard fought victories immigrant communities worked towards for years, we're excited to help eligible Californians realize the full benefits of administrative relief. As soon as the new initiatives take effect, we will be ready to ensure potential applicants have the resources they need."

David Huerta, President of SEIU-USWW:
“Hard working, immigrant parents help make this nation strong. We call on the courts to lift the injunction that is keeping immigrant families in limbo and hurting the growth of our local, state, and national economy. It is time to implement DAPA and expanded DACA."

María Elena Durazo, Vice President for Immigration, Civil Rights and Diversity at UNITE HERE: "Today, the immigrant community is stronger and more united than ever. We will not stand on the sidelines and watch Republican-driven lawsuits crush the dreams of millions of Angelinos. Silence is not an option, and I stand with every parent and child as we fight for DACA and DAPA."

ABOUT READY CALIFORNIA
Ready California is a statewide campaign working to support California institutions and organizations to ensure the maximum number of eligible Californians benefit from administrative relief programs for immigrants, known as DACA and DAPA, while strengthening the statewide infrastructure to respond to future immigration reform. Learn more at ready-california.org.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles is the nation’s largest Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) legal and civil rights organization and serves more than 15,000 individuals and organizations every year. Founded in 1983 as the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Advancing Justice - LA’s mission is to advocate for civil rights, provide legal services and education, and build coalitions to positively influence and impact Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and to create a more equitable and harmonious society. Through direct legal services, impact litigation, policy analysis and advocacy, leadership development and capacity building, Advancing Justice - LA seeks to serve the most vulnerable members of the AANHPI community while also building a strong AANHPI voice for civil rights and social justice.