



Coalition of Bar Associations of Color

## **STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR CONGRESSIONAL EXPRESSION OF REGRET FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF ASIAN EXCLUSIONARY LAWS**

**WHEREAS** the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color (CBAC), organized in 1983, is a coalition created to act as a collective voice for issues of common concern to its member organizations; and

**WHEREAS** the member organizations of the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color are the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), the National Bar Association (NBA), and the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA); and

**WHEREAS**, pervasive anti-Asian sentiment during the mid-1800s and early 1900s resulted in the passage of a number of laws at the local, state, and federal levels to exclude Asians from the United States, bar them from naturalization, and impair their ability to integrate into their communities;

**WHEREAS**, the federal laws targeting Chinese immigrants peaked with Congress's passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which imposed a 10-year moratorium on Chinese labor immigration and was the first law in American history to restrict immigration by race or ethnicity;

**WHEREAS**, Congress revisited the Chinese Exclusion Act five more times between 1884 and 1904, each time imposing additional restrictions on Chinese immigration and naturalization;

**WHEREAS**, despite the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, the United States government has never expressed regret for its passage of the legislation;

**WHEREAS**, the measures implemented against Asian immigration were not limited to the Chinese;

**WHEREAS**, in 1907 the "Gentleman's Agreement" between the U.S. and Japanese governments restricted the immigration of Japanese laborers to the United States;

**WHEREAS**, with the passage of the Immigration Act of 1917, Congress expanded exclusion provisions to anyone born in the "Asiatic Barred Zone," an area that included most of the rest of the Asian continent and the Pacific, with the exception of areas at the time under U.S. jurisdiction;

**WHEREAS**, the Immigration Act of 1924, which included the National Origins Act, created national immigration quotas based on the population in the United States from the 1890 census – favoring immigration from European countries;

**WHEREAS**, the Immigration Act of 1924 also excluded immigrants ineligible for citizenship, which meant all Asians due to the racial bar to naturalization;

**WHEREAS**, the final vestiges of discriminatory immigration policy were not removed until 1965; and

**WHEREAS**, the present-day acknowledgment of the wrongfully enacted measures would serve as a timely reminder to the United States to live up to its principles of equality and affirm its commitment to the civil rights of all people.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Coalition of Bar of Association of Color supports the passage of a congressional resolution expressing regret for the discriminatory 19th and 20th century laws restricting Asian immigration and naturalization.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the legislative priority of the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

WE, the duly-elected Presidents of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), the National Bar Association (NBA), and the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA), hereby certify that they foregoing Resolution was duly enacted by a duly-noticed meetings of the Board of Directors.



Diana Sen  
President, Hispanic National Bar Association

7/20/11

Date

Paul O. Hirose  
President, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

7-20-11

Date

Demetrius Shelton  
President, National Bar Association

7/20/11

Date

Mary Smith  
President-Elect, National Native American Bar Association

7-20-11

Date