



NEWS RELEASE

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund

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NALEO Educational Fund Urges U.S. Senators to Oppose Vitter Amendment

Birthright to citizenship should be protected and upheld for all Americans, including those born to parents who do not have legal immigration status

Washington, D.C. – Today, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund called on members of the U.S. Senate to oppose the amendment (274) proposed by U.S. Senator David Vitter (R-LA) to The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Bill (S.178).

The Vitter amendment, which has also been introduced as S.45, The Birthright Citizenship Act, would attempt to rewrite the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, overturning long-established U.S. Supreme Court precedent and a crucial protection of equal civil rights in the United States.

The Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment clearly states, “All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.” A cornerstone of our nation’s civil liberties, the 14th amendment has played an integral role in striking down laws that once aimed to prevent African Americans and Latinos born in the United States from voting, owning or leasing land, accessing public accommodations, and much more.

“By preventing the children of undocumented and temporary legal immigrants from receiving citizenship, the Vitter amendment aims to fundamentally and dangerously redefine the 14th Amendment to create a permanent underclass of American residents,” stated Arturo Vargas, NALEO Educational Fund Executive Director. “Because many immigrants to the United States today are Latino, this amendment, if adopted, would send an unwelcome message to the Latino community that Congress does not value our contributions to the strength and prosperity of the United States.”

Vargas went on to say, “Birthright citizenship reflects deeply-rooted American values that must be preserved. We strongly oppose the Vitter Amendment and will be watching closely to see how U.S. Senators proceed on this controversial amendment.”

The U.S. Senate is expected to vote on The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Bill (S.178) this afternoon. A copy of U.S. Senator Vitter's bill text can be found [here](#).

Media Note: Spokespersons are available to discuss the Vitter amendment. For interview requests, please contact Amanda Bosquez (abosquez@naleo.org, 202-546-2536) or Paula Valle Castanon (pvalle@naleo.org, 213-747-7606 ext. 4414).

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About NALEO Educational Fund

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.