



NEWS RELEASE

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

For Immediate Release
April 28, 2015

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NALEO Educational Fund Submits Testimony to House Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security

Testimony calls for upholding our values as a nation by maintaining our Constitution's grant of citizenship to all who are born within the United States

Ending birthright citizenship would send an unwelcome message to Latinos and place undue burdens on a nation that should be focused on overhauling our broken immigration system

Washington, D.C. – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today announced the submission of written testimony on birthright citizenship from Executive Director Arturo Vargas to the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security. The Subcommittee will hold a hearing focused on “Birthright Citizenship: Is it the Right Policy for America?” on Wednesday, April 29, 2015 at 1 p.m. EDT in Room 2237 of the Rayburn House Office Building.

Excerpts of the testimony are included below, with full testimony text available [here](#).

The [testimony](#) submitted to the Subcommittee expresses support for upholding our values as a nation by maintaining our Constitution's grant of citizenship to all who are born within the United States. It also outlines concerns over the creation of a permanent underclass and the financial and administrative burdens that would be placed on our nation if recognition of birthright citizenship ended. Highlights from NALEO Educational Fund testimony include:

“Because many immigrants to the United States today are Latino, this proposal, if adopted, would send an unwelcome message to the Latino community that Members of Congress do not value our contributions to the security and success of the United States. Birthright citizenship reflects deeply-rooted American values that must be preserved.

“An attempt to amend the meaning of the Citizenship Clause would betray fundamental American principles, and undermine peace and prosperity within our borders as well. Preventing the children of undocumented and temporary legal immigrants from receiving citizenship would create a permanent underclass of Americans who share our culture, language, and aspirations, but are unable to contribute fully to our economy and democracy. Some of these members of our society would, through no fault of their own,

suffer lifelong stigma and exclusion as stateless individuals. As a result, our nation would experience the serious and dangerous problems which have beset the nations that have pursued similar policies to restrict or end birthright citizenship – the presence of a significant segment of the population with immigrant origins who can never be fully integrated into American society.

“Ending recognition of birthright citizenship would also impose significant financial and administrative burdens on our nation’s families and on federal, state and local governments. Officials would be forced to expend significant resources creating and administering a new layer of bureaucracy which new parents would need to navigate to establish their children’s rights to U.S. citizenship. Such a costly and unnecessary procedure would divert funds from more important government priorities, such as providing for public safety. In addition, this counter-productive proposal and un-American notion is a distraction from the crucial need to develop a framework for comprehensive immigration reform.”

As the nation’s leading nonprofit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service, NALEO Educational Fund is uniquely positioned to comment on the issue of birthright citizenship. Our constituency encompass the nation’s more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials, and include Republicans, Democrats and Independents. Recognized nationally as a civic engagement pioneer and leader with more than 30 years of experience, the NALEO Educational Fund has guided hundreds of thousands of eligible lawful permanent residents (LPRs) through the naturalization process, and helped hundreds of thousands of Latino U.S. citizens register to vote and take part in elections.

The full testimony submitted to the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security can be found here: www.naleo.org/downloads/2015/NALEObirthrightcitizenship_testimony0415.pdf.

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About NALEO Educational Fund

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