

OCA Celebrates the 35th Anniversary of Landmark Case for Undocumented K-12 Public School Students

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates celebrates the 35th Anniversary of the United States Supreme Court case, Plyler v. Doe, that granted that K-12 public education is a constitutional right to undocumented students.

On this month in 1982, the Supreme Court issued Plyler v. Doe - a landmark court decision that granted all students in the public K-12 school system the constitutional right to an education regardless of immigration status. The case protects undocumented students against any direct or indirect effort that may prevent students from enrolling in school.

“Plyler v. Doe is a landmark case from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund that granted all students, regardless of immigration status, a constitutional right to a public education system. The case reaffirmed that the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment applies all children in the United States,” said Vicki Shu, OCA Vice President of Public Affairs.

“As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, we have a long history of fighting for an equitable public school system. When limited English proficient children were not getting adequate support, Chinese Americans fought to make the system equitable for them. The Lau v. Nichols case was a milestone victory that established a constitutional right to language access programs for students of all backgrounds. Plyler v. Doe continues that movement towards educational equity. OCA remains vigilant in ensuring that we do not fall victim to any efforts that undermine the constitutional right to a public K-12 education. We want to make it clear to our lawmakers that all students, regardless of their immigration status, race, national origin, language ability or other identifiers, have a constitutional right to a public education.”

OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates is a national organization of community advocates dedicated to improving the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs).

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