



Support for Universal Representation, SB317

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We write as members of a new organization, the Montgomery County Progressive Asian American Network (MoCoPAAN), to strongly support Universal Representation (SB317).

The MoCoPAAN's mission is to raise the visibility of Asian Americans through lifting up progressive voices and strengthening allyship through strategic communications. In doing so, we wish to demonstrate that Asian Americans have a multitude of voices. We speak out on issues that affect people of diverse backgrounds: representation, equity and inclusion; immigrant rights; and, racial discrimination, racial and profiling, and anti-Black racism. As such, we believe that it is essential that the state provide funding for legal representation of detained immigrants. This legislation will ensure fairness and due process in our deportation system.

Along with nearly one-third of all immigrants in Maryland, Asian American communities in our state are directly affected by this legislation.

Over 35,000 Marylanders are undocumented Asian immigrants, constituting more than 1 in 8 of undocumented immigrants in the state. These groups face multiple language barriers, lack of culturally competent legal services, and limited capacity among Asian immigrant-serving community organizations make undocumented Asians vulnerable to detention and deportation

We urge you to support SB317 to strengthen immigrant rights and due process.