



National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

Statement in Support of Language Access in Federally Funded Services

Endorsed March 2014

WHEREAS, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) is the national association of Asian Pacific American attorneys, judges, law professors and law students, representing the interests of over 40,000 attorneys and nearly 70 national, state, and local Asian Pacific American bar associations; NAPABA members include solo practitioners, large firm lawyers, corporate counsel, legal service and non-profit attorneys, and lawyers serving at all levels of government; and NAPABA is committed to addressing civil rights issues confronting Asian Pacific American communities and people of color;

WHEREAS, increasing access to justice for limited English proficient individuals has long been a high priority for NAPABA;

WHEREAS, NAPABA has supported efforts to expand language access to the legal system through efforts including;

- Publishing the 2007 report, *Increasing Language Access for Limited English Proficient Asian Pacific Americans: Report for Action*;
- Drafting a 2008 memorandum to the American Bar Association's (ABA) Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants (SCLAID) encouraging the ABA to adopt language access standards as recommended in NAPABA's report;
- Co-sponsoring the *ABA Standards for Language Access in the Courts* that were adopted as ABA policy on February 6, 2012;
- Facilitating discussion about language access at the 2012 NAPABA Convention Pro Bono/Public Interest Summit in Washington, D.C. and hosting other panels on language access at prior NAPABA conventions; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 U.S. Census reports that 32 percent of Asian Americans, 8 percent of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and 20 percent of the entire American population are limited English proficient;

WHEREAS, according to research gathered from the 2010 U.S. Census, limited English proficient individuals are more likely to live below the federal poverty line compared to the overall U.S. population;

WHEREAS, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 13166 requires all agencies receiving federal financial funding to make meaningful efforts to provide language access (e.g., qualified interpreters, translated documents) for limited English speaking persons;

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WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the employment of interpreters and translators will increase by 46 percent in the next 20 years – much faster than the average of all occupations – due to projected demand and continued growth of language diversity in the U.S.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NAPABA:

1. Calls upon all courts and other adjudicatory tribunals to prioritize effective implementation of the *ABA Standards on Language Access in the Courts*.
2. Calls upon state and federal executive branches to provide adequate funding to allow courts and other adjudicatory tribunals to effectively provide service to limited English proficient individuals.
3. Supports efforts to increase access to all federally funded services for limited English proficient individuals, including within the courts and larger justice system, as well as in the health care system, voting, schools, and other institutions.
4. Will update its report, *Increasing Language Access for Limited English Proficient Asian Pacific Americans: Report for Action*, in order to provide an important resource to the community.
5. Authorizes its president, board, and staff to communicate the content of this resolution to its members, affiliates, other bar associations, members of Congress, the Administration, the press, and others to take steps to implement this resolution, as they deem necessary.
6. Supports this resolution as a policy priority until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.