



**NAKASEC**  
미주한인봉사교육단체협의회  
NATIONAL KOREAN AMERICAN  
SERVICE & EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

**D.C. OFFICE D.C. 지부**

1628 16<sup>TH</sup> STREET NW, SUITE 306  
WASHINGTON D.C. 20009  
T: 202.299.9540 | F: 202.299.9729  
WWW.NAKASEC.ORG

**L.A. OFFICE LA지부**

900 S. CRENSHAW BOULEVARD  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90019

**AFFILIATES 가입단체**

*chicago, il*

KOREAN AMERICAN  
RESOURCE & CULTURAL CENTER  
한인교육문화마당집  
6146 N LINCOLN AVENUE  
CHICAGO, IL 60659  
T: 773.588.9158 | F: 773.588.5159  
WWW.CHICAGOKRCC.ORG

*los angeles, ca*

KOREAN RESOURCE CENTER  
민족학교  
900 S. CRENSHAW BOULEVARD  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90019  
T: 323.937.3718 | F: 323.937.3526  
WWW.KRCLA.ORG

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Contact: Morna Ha, NAKASEC, ([mha@nakasec.org](mailto:mha@nakasec.org)), 202-299-9540  
Sik Son, KRCC, ([sohnsik@chicagokrcc.org](mailto:sohnsik@chicagokrcc.org)), 773-588-9158  
DaeJoong Yoon, KRC, ([djyoon@krcla.org](mailto:djyoon@krcla.org)), 323-937-3718

**Administration Proposes Changes to Immigration Procedures to Keep Families Together**

Washington, DC – On Friday, January 6, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office announced it will begin the process to make an important procedural change that would allow spouses and children of U.S. citizens to stay together in the United States while family members work to gain permanent U.S. residency. Under current law, undocumented immigrants who are the spouses or children of US citizens would have to return to their home countries to become legal permanent residents. Their departure, however, triggers a 3 or 10 year bar to re-entry and waivers to the bar must be made from the home country. The waiver process could take months or even years. The proposed change would allow these individuals to apply for the waiver while in the US. The rule does not apply for family members of legal permanent residents.

The following is a statement by the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium and its affiliates the Korean Resource Center in Los Angeles and the Korean American Resource and Cultural Center in Chicago:

*We applaud the efforts of the Administration to make a small but common-sense change to the current chaotic waiver system. Currently, families are unnecessarily forced to become separated for sometimes years as they wait for visas to be processed. These changes would allow individuals to apply while in the US, keep families intact and eliminate the unnecessary hurdles to people coming out of the shadows.*

*With today's announcement, the Administration recognizes the value of family unity and its fundamental role in communities and this nation. If the proposed changes go through, families no longer have to make the difficult*

*choice between facing a prolonged separated from their wives, husbands, and children or staying together and continuing to live in fear of deportation.*

*Despite these positive steps, loved ones of legal permanent residents are not currently part of the proposed change. Families should not be torn apart because of their immigration status and we will continue to work to ensure that all families can be kept together.*

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The National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC) was founded in 1994 by local community centers to project a national progressive voice and promote the full participation of Korean Americans as a part of a greater goal of building a national movement for social change. NAKASEC is based in Los Angeles and has an office in D.C. NAKASEC also has affiliates in Los Angeles (Korean Resource Center) and in Chicago (Korean American Resource & Cultural Center).