



PRESS RELEASE

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AAJC is formerly known as NAPALC

AAJC Opposes Alito Nomination for the Supreme Court

Washington, DC, Dec. 13, 2005 – The Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) today announced its opposition to the confirmation of Judge Samuel A. Alito, Jr. as associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

“Judge Alito’s nomination raises serious concerns for the Asian American community,” said Vincent A. Eng, deputy director of AAJC. “In reviewing Judge Alito’s past writings and decisions, it is clear that his legal positions have undermined and lessened the constitutional and due process protections available to immigrants. We urge the Senate to reject Judge Alito’s nomination.”

Judge Alito was nominated by President George W. Bush to replace Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. As a deputy assistant attorney general at the Department of Justice under President Ronald Reagan, Judge Alito argued that certain non-citizens are not entitled to the protections offered by the U.S. Constitution. Judge Alito also raised opposition to the Supreme Court decisions that first articulated the fundamental civil rights principle of “one person, one vote.” Those decisions later paved the way for major strides in the effort to secure equal voting rights for all Americans and greater representation of racial and ethnic minorities, at both the state and federal levels of government.

Supreme Court decisions continue to have an immense impact on the lives of Asian Americans, ranging from *Gong Lum v. Rice* (1927), an unsuccessful challenge to school segregation that would later be overturned by *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, to *United States v. Korematsu* (1944), where the Court upheld the internment of Japanese Americans. Often, cases where the rights and liberties of minorities are at question are decided by a very narrow 5-4 margin. In recent Supreme Court jurisprudence, retiring Justice O’Connor often provided that key critical vote.

“Supreme Court decisions significantly affect Asian Americans,” said Aimee J. Baldillo, AAJC deputy director of programs. “Often, cases where the rights and liberties of minorities are at question are decided by a very narrow 5-4 margin. Unfortunately, based on Judge Alito’s record, we believe that his decisions would fail to demonstrate a clear understanding of key issues important to the civil rights community.”

Judge Alito’s nomination will be taken up by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary in early January 2006.

Currently over 30 national organizations have opposed Judge Alito’s nomination or expressed serious concern. They include the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; Alliance for Justice; National Council of Jewish Women; American Civil Liberties Union; AFL-CIO; Human Rights Campaign; Congressional Hispanic Caucus; National Partnership for Women & Families; and the Interfaith Alliance.

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The Asian American Justice Center (www.advancingequality.org), formerly known as NAPALC, is a national organization dedicated to defending and advancing the civil and human rights of Asian Americans. It works closely with three affiliates – the Asian American Institute of Chicago (www.aaichicago.org), the Asian Law Caucus (www.asianlawcaucus.org) in San Francisco, and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (www.apalc.org) in Los Angeles – and 102 community partners in 47 cities and 24 states in the country.