



March 16, 2026

## **OPPOSE S.3752 SAVE America Act**

Dear Senator,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice (Advancing Justice), a national affiliation of four independent nonprofit organizations dedicated to serving some of our nation's most rapidly growing racial communities, urges you to oppose S.3752, SAVE America Act.

Advancing Justice has worked for decades to preserve the voting rights for every eligible American while fighting against voter suppression tactics that impede Asian Americans' access to the ballot box. The Advancing Justice affiliation is comprised of our nation's largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders located in Los Angeles (Advancing Justice Southern California), the largest national Asian American policy advocacy organization located in Washington, D.C. (Advancing Justice – Asian American Justice Center (AAJC)), the leading Midwest Asian American advocacy organization (Advancing Justice – Chicago), and the Atlanta-based Asian American advocacy organization that serves one of the largest and most rapidly growing Asian American communities in the South (Advancing Justice – Atlanta).

### ***Documentary Proof of Citizenship for Voter Registration Unnecessarily Harms Many Eligible Americans, Including Asian American Voters***

S.3752 is harmful to our democracy and a threat to the freedom to vote for all Americans. The SAVE America Act would prevent millions of eligible U.S. citizens, including a disproportionate number of Asian Americans and other communities of color, from accessing their right to vote. S.3752 amends the National Voter Registration Act, 52 U.S.C. § 20501 *et seq.* to require documentary proof of citizenship to register to vote in federal elections. For many, that means producing a passport or birth certificate every time they register or re-register to vote. More than 21 million eligible voters don't have these documents readily available.<sup>1</sup> Some Americans are more likely than others to lack these documents, including the millions of married women who change their names (i.e., their documents don't match), younger voters, and voters of color.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin Moris, Cora Henry, "Millions of Americans Don't Have Documents Proving Their Citizenship Readily Available, The Brennan Center for Justice," June 11, 2024, available at <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/millions-americans-dont-have-documents-proving-their-citizenship-readily>.

<sup>2</sup> Institute for Responsive Government, The SAVE Act: How a Proof of Citizenship Requirement Would Impact Elections, (January 30, 2025). <https://responsivegov.org/research/the-save-act-how-a-proof-of-citizenship-requirement-would-impact-elections/>

Proof of citizenship requirements have an amplified effect on Asian Americans specifically due to the high rates of immigration and naturalization in the community, 74.4% of Asian Americans are foreign-born adults and 47.6% have naturalized nationwide, compared to 4.6% of white adults who are foreign-born and 3.2% who have naturalized.<sup>3</sup> Naturalized citizens often do not have their certificates of naturalization or lack ready access to them, making it hard or impossible to get or apply for a U.S. passport. There is a myriad of reasons for this; documents like naturalization papers were not designed to be carried like a driver's license or passport. Documents might be in the home of another family member, kept in safe deposit boxes, or home storage; and subsequently lost, destroyed, or stolen. Additionally, record keeping before 1956 did not have robust backup copies leaving individuals without records if the documents were destroyed or lost.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, of the required documents that can be used to register to vote listed in the SAVE America Act, naturalized citizens will not have all the options available to them (for example, a birth certificate, as by definition they were not born in the U.S.) They also face additional fees to obtain a replacement Certificate of Naturalization, which currently requires \$555 and takes around 8.5 to 11 months to process<sup>5</sup> or a passport which can cost a minimum of \$130 and take four to six weeks to get.<sup>6</sup> These onerous requirements impose undue obstacles on lawful voters.

The SAVE America Act mandates citizenship documentation every time a voter registers, making it especially burdensome for voters who move to register in their new location. The requirement would impede voter registration drives and other types of voter registration events that are critical to ensuring voters are registered in time to cast their ballot. Census data, analyzed by Demos, shows that during the 2022 election cycle nearly 10.5 million people nationwide registered to vote via “registration drive” or via party efforts at “schools, hospitals, or campuses.”<sup>7</sup> Registration drives are especially important for people of color, who are twice as

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<sup>3</sup> Author’s calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 ACS 1 Year Estimates, Sex by Age by Nativity and Citizenship Status <https://data.census.gov/table/ACS1Y2023.B05003D?t=Native+and+Foreign-Born> (white alone, not Hispanic or Latino). U.S. Census Bureau, Table B05003D: Sex By Age By Nativity And Citizenship Status (Asian Alone), 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACS1Y2023.B05003D?t=Native+and+Foreign-Born>.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Citizens and Immigration Services, History of the Certificate of Naturalization (1906-1956), Last Reviewed/Updated: 02/05/25, <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/stories-from-the-archives/history-of-the-certificate-of-naturalization-1906-1956#:~:text=Many%20%E2%80%9COld%20Law%E2%80%9D%20Certificates%20of,biographical%20information%20or%20security%20features.&text=Courts%20did%20not%20keep%20copies,administration%20of%20the%20naturalization%20laws>.

<sup>5</sup> See U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Our Fees Chart, <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/our-fees> (documenting the filing fee) (last visited February 11, 2025); U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Check Case Processing Times, <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/> (check for most current processing time by form) (last visited February 11, 2025).

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of State, Travel. State. Gov, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2022, Table 12 (Method of Registration, By Selected Characteristics) (April 2023), available at <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/timeseries/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-586.html>





incredibly concerning for the Asian American community who tends to vote by mail at higher rates. Current Population Survey (CPS) reports for the November 2024 election indicate that 46.5% of Asian Americans who voted in the election chose to vote by mail.<sup>14</sup> Contrast that with Hispanic voters who chose to vote by mail 33.7% of the time, 28.6% for non-Hispanic White voters, and 19.0% for Black voters.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the 2024 Asian American Voter Survey found that nearly half of Asian American voters (46%) prefer voting by mail or dropping their ballot off, instead of voting in person.<sup>16</sup>

### ***SAVE America Act Will Result in Widespread Wrongful Voter Purges***

The SAVE America Act will inevitably lead to widespread voter purges as states would be directed to recklessly purge their voter rolls, putting lawfully registered citizens at risk of being disenfranchised. Notably, the SAVE America Act fails to mandate that registered voters be notified before being removed from the voting rolls. Voters who are wrongfully purged under the SAVE America Act may remain unaware until they arrive to cast their ballot and discover they are no longer registered. History shows that these kinds of heedless removals will include eligible voters because they have. In 2024, erroneous purges in Alabama,<sup>17</sup> Virginia,<sup>18</sup> Ohio,<sup>19</sup> and Texas<sup>20</sup> disenfranchised thousands of lawful voters, potentially impacting the 45,717 eligible Asian American voters in Alabama, 391,634 in Virginia, 165,274 in Ohio, and 847,676 in Texas.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to voter purges, S.3752 would require states to submit their voter rolls to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on a regular basis, creating a federalized surveillance system of citizens. Last year Texas shared its voter rolls voluntarily with the Department of Homeland Security using a tool called the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements, or SAVE, that mistakenly flagged voters as noncitizens. As reported by the Texas Tribune, “[Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements] SAVE has made persistent mistakes,

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<sup>14</sup> Author’s calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Public-Use Data, November 2024 <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/complete.24.html>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> AAPI Data, 2024 Asian American Voter Survey, (July 10, 2024) <https://aapidata.com/featured/2024-asian-american-voter-survey/>

<sup>17</sup> Safiyah Riddle, A federal judge halts an Alabama program that purged thousands of legal voters, AP News, October 16, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/alabama-voter-purge-allen-secretary-state-judge-6cec74a5bc2afef14beae6827d4cf971>

<sup>18</sup> Jude Joffe-Block, U.S. citizens are among the voters removed in Virginia's controversial purge, NPR, October 30, 2024, <https://www.npr.org/2024/10/29/nx-s1-5169204/virginia-noncitizen-voter-purge>

<sup>19</sup> Nick Evans, Citizens caught in Ohio noncitizen voting audit say latest letter offers incomplete information, Ohio Capital Journal, September 4, 2024, <https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2024/09/04/citizens-caught-in-ohio-noncitizen-voting-audit-say-latest-letter-offers-incomplete-information/>

<sup>20</sup> Lexi Churchill, Vivianna Davila, et al, Gov. Greg Abbott boasted that Texas removed 6,500 noncitizens from its voter rolls. That number was likely inflated, The Texas Tribune, ProPublica, and Votebeat, October 15, 2024, <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/10/15/texas-noncitizen-voter-roll-removal-included-americans/>

<sup>21</sup> Author’s calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 ACS 5 Year Estimates, Sex by Age by Nativity and Citizenship Status <https://data.census.gov/table/ACS5YR2021.B05003?t=031:Citizenship&g=040XX00US01,39,48,51>



particularly in assessing the status of people born outside the U.S., data gathered from local election administrators, interviews and emails obtained via public records requests show.”<sup>22</sup> This is deeply troubling for Asian American voters due to the high rates of immigration and naturalization in the community.

### ***Conclusion***

The SAVE America Act undermines faith in our democracy and the legitimacy of our elections. It seeks to stoke fear in Asian American and other immigrant communities. Strict laws and safeguards are already in place to ensure only citizens vote in federal elections; existing laws impose criminal penalties, fines, and the risk of deportation. Instead of proceeding with this frivolous and harmful legislation, Congress must act to guarantee that all eligible voters have access to the ballot box strengthening our multiracial democracy, such as passing the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Advancing Justice urges you to vote against S.3752 SAVE America Act. If you have any questions, please contact Zaria Guignard, Manager of Census and Civic Engagement at [zguignard@advancingjustice-aajc.org](mailto:zguignard@advancingjustice-aajc.org).

Sincerely,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian American Justice Center

Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Atlanta,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Chicago,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California

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<sup>22</sup> Jen Fifield, ProPublica, and Zach Despart, ProPublica and The Texas Tribune, A federal tool to check voter citizenship keeps making mistakes. It led to confusion in Texas, Feb. 13, 2026, <https://www.texastribune.org/2026/02/13/save-voter-citizenship-tool-mistakes-confusion/>

