



## Statement of Principles

### Who We Are:

Americans for Constitutional Citizenship is a nationwide coalition of organizations and individuals who support the American Citizenship Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution. While we have a diversity of views on many issues, we stand united in our shared belief that the Citizenship Clause is a fundamental freedom that must be preserved.

### Why We Support – And Will Protect – The Constitution’s Citizenship Clause:

*“All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.” U.S. Const., amend. XIV, § 1.*

- Ratified in 1868, in the wake of the Civil War, our nation’s bloodiest conflict, the Citizenship Clause was designed to ensure that all children born in the United States, with minor exceptions for children of foreign diplomats and invading forces, are citizens. It ensures that states could never again seek to create an underclass of Americans.
- Since the Citizenship Clause’s adoption, the federal courts have repeatedly confirmed that it means exactly what it says. In 1898, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* that the Clause guarantees citizenship to people born in the United States even if their parents were ineligible for citizenship, and that Congress could not limit its meaning by statute. This ruling has remained settled law for more than a century.
- The Citizenship Clause’s guarantee has been profoundly beneficial for our nation. It has served as a cornerstone of the movement to secure civil rights for all Americans, including the right to vote. And it has played an important role in unifying America’s great cultural diversity, which serves as a role model for the rest of the world.
- Efforts to undermine the Citizenship Clause, whether by federal statute or through state legislation, are unconstitutional. The Constitution, our foundational legal document, overrides conflicting federal statutes as well as contrary state constitutions or laws.
- Taking out our frustration with the current immigration system by creating a dual society would be misguided, would violate our values of equality and fairness, and would result in exactly the sort of permanent underclass that the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment was written to prevent from ever again existing in our nation.
- Undermining the Citizenship Clause would have many other disastrous effects for everyone in our nation. The citizenship of every person born in the United States could be called into question – and requiring parents to prove their citizenship, in the midst of the momentous occasion of childbirth, would require the creation of extensive new government bureaucracy along with new costs, burdensome procedures, invasion of privacy, and legal disputes.



The undersigned members of Americans for Constitutional Citizenship support the Constitution's Citizenship Clause, which guarantees United States citizenship – both federal and state – to those born in this country, and oppose any effort to diminish its scope or protections.

**Member Organizations:**

AFL-CIO  
African American Catholic Congregation  
African American Ministers In Action  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee  
American Association for Affirmative Action  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Immigration Council  
American Immigration Lawyers Association  
American Jewish Committee  
America's Voice  
Anti-Defamation League  
Asian American Justice Center (a member of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice)  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Pacific American Community Support and Service Association  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center  
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations  
Border Action Network  
Casa Latina  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Financial Privacy and Human Rights  
The Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc.  
Conference of Asian Pacific American Law Faculty  
DC Vote  
Demos  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund  
Disciples Justice Action Network  
Equal Justice Society  
Faith Action for Community Equity (FACE) Hawai'i  
Farmworker Justice  
First Focus  
Franciscan Action Network  
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society  
Hispanic Federation  
Hispanically Speaking News  
Immigration Equality Action Fund  
Japanese American Citizens League



Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund  
NAACP  
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc.  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association  
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives  
National Association of Human Rights Workers  
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National CAPACD  
National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights  
National Conference of Puerto Rican Women Inc (NACOPRW)  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of La Raza  
National Education Association  
National Employment Law Project  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force  
National Hispana Leadership Institute  
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL)  
National Hispanic Media Coalition  
National Immigration Forum  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Urban League  
National Women's Law Center  
NETWORK  
OCA  
The Opportunity Agenda  
One Nation Indivisible  
People For the American Way  
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.  
Society of American Law Teachers  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
Southwest Voter Registration Education Project  
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society



United States Hispanic Leadership Institute  
William C. Velasquez Institute