



# JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

1828 L Street NW, Suite 802 • Washington, DC • 20036  
Ph: (202) 223-1240 • Fax: (202) 296-8082 • E-mail: [dc@jacl.org](mailto:dc@jacl.org)

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Contacts: Floyd Mori, National Director  
[dc@jacl.org](mailto:dc@jacl.org)  
Debee Yamamoto, Public Policy Director  
[policy@jacl.org](mailto:policy@jacl.org)

## **Statement by National Asian Pacific American communities on New York State's Endorsement of the REAL ID Act**

### ***Governor Eliot Spitzer Adds Fuel to an Alarming Trend and Disappoints National Asian Pacific American Leaders***

National Asian Pacific American leaders expressed their dismay over Governor Eliot Spitzer's announcement that New York State will implement the REAL ID Act at a press conference with Department of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff on Saturday, October 27, 2007. Five weeks after stating that New York State would adopt a "One Drivers' License for All" policy, Governor Spitzer has taken a step backwards by supporting the implementation of a multi-tiered licensing system. By caving in to vocal anti-immigrant forces, Governor Spitzer's policy turnaround is opening the doors to widespread discrimination and harassment of undocumented immigrants.

To date, seventeen states have already passed legislation opposing the REAL ID Act and many others have expressed serious concerns. Governor Spitzer had an opportunity to support the many communities across the nation rightly voicing their opposition to the implementation of the REAL ID Act. Instead, he chose to add fuel to the fire by standing with advocates of an extreme, anti-immigrant policy.

The endorsement of the REAL ID Act is bad policy. New York is home to many vibrant immigrant communities and it is a bellwether state for immigrant-related policies. Governor Spitzer's action has serious implications on how all states will treat immigrants who contribute greatly to our society and nation. We urge Asian Pacific American communities to oppose Governor Spitzer's trading away of a "win-win" solution for a "lose-lose" policy.

#### **Undersigned organizations:**

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Asian American Justice Center  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Hmong National Development, Inc.  
Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA)  
South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow (SAALT)  
South East Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)