**Deportation and Southeast Asian Americans**

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| **Southeast Asian Americans at a Glance** |
| The **Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)** is a national civil rights organization that empowers Southeast Asian American (SEAA) communities from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam to create a socially just and equitable society. SEARAC was founded in 1979 to foster the development of non-profit organizations led by and for SEAAs. For SEARAC, SEAA is a political identity that comes from the shared experience of people who came to this country as refugees and include but are not limited to the following ethnic groups: Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Vietnamese, Iu-Mien, Montagnard, etc. As representatives of the largest refugee community ever resettled in the United States, SEARAC stands together with other refugee communities, communities of color, and social justice movements in pursuit of social equity.  Southeast Asian Americans are the single largest group ever resettled in the United States. Today, almost 3 million Southeast Asian Americans call the US home and live throughout this nation. California is home to 910,433 Southeast Asian Americans, the largest Southeast Asian American population in the country. California is home to 910,433 Southeast Asian Americans, by far the largest population in the country. |
| **Facts on Deportation** |
| * In 1996, Congress passed the *Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act* (AEDPA) and the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act* (IIRIRA). These laws were made to be retroactive, meaning that noncitizens could be deported for certain crimes **even if they were committed before the passage of the law**. * Additionally, the laws **severely restricted** the ability of immigration judges to consider the individual circumstances of a person before ordering deportation. * Since 1998, over 17,000 Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans have received final deportation orders, **including many legal permanent residents**. A disproportionate percentage of Southeast Asian individuals are deported on the basis of a criminal charge. * According to the Immigration Policy Center, **68% of legal permanent residents who are deported are deported for minor, non-violent crimes.** Noncitizens are punished through the criminal justice system and then can be punished again with a life sentence of deportation. |
| **How to Keep our Communities and our Families Together** |

* Support Legislation that ends mandatory detentions, automatic deportations, and restores judicial discretion to immigration judges.

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