

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

**Statement for the Record from Reps. Chu and Honda**  
**The Separation of Nuclear Families under U.S. Immigration Law**  
**Thursday, March 14, 2013**

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We are heartened to see that the Judiciary Immigration Subcommittee is taking the issue of forced family separation due to our immigration system seriously. Families are at the core of who we are as a nation, and have been since our founding. It's a tragedy that we are separating mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, sisters, and brothers from their loved ones.

Reuniting immigrant families is particularly critical to the Asian Pacific American and Latino communities. Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, India, and China rank among the top five countries with the largest numbers of loved ones waiting to join their American citizen and legal permanent resident families in the United States. Today, unmarried adult children of U.S. citizens from Mexico are forced to wait 20 years to be reunited with their families. Some family members from the Philippines have been forced to wait 24 years to come to the U.S. to join their loved ones.

And families should not be divided across continents when we know that our society benefits by keeping them together. Families pool together resources to start and run businesses, create jobs, buy homes and send their American children to college for the skills that they will need to strengthen our global competitiveness. Families also provide security for aging workforces, affordable homecare for young children and the opportunity for breadwinners to contribute to our economy.

While, this hearing will undoubtedly raise many crucial issues about protecting the family unit, we are concerned that the title seems to exclude many family members, with strong bonds and a long history of immigration and participation in the U.S. economy. We do not believe that adult children, whether married or single, or siblings should be excluded for immigration to the United States. Each family is different, with different needs, and U.S. citizens deserve a path for these family members to join them.

For example, Sudhir is a 44 year-old unmarried man from India. When Sudhir's mother was pregnant she developed eclampsia resulting in reduced oxygen to Sudhir during the pregnancy. Sudhir is developmentally disabled, with an IQ of 40. Sudhir has always lived with his parents who have cared for him as if he were a young child. Sudhir is a friendly, docile, and curious person with a strong sense of imagination. He also loves to play.

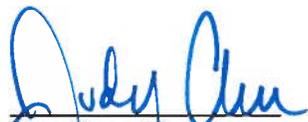
Sudhir's two siblings live in the United States. His brother, Dinesh, arrived in the U.S. in 1995 on a J-1 visa and has been in the U.S. for about 17 years. He is a lawful permanent resident, has filed for citizenship, and his naturalization interview has been scheduled for March 2013. His sister, Anjali, arrived in the U.S. in 1998 on an H-1B and has been here for about 14 years. She is a U.S. citizen. Both Dinesh and Anjali are married to U.S. citizens – Anjali has two children. Both are physicians living in the Chicago area.

Anjali has filed a family petition for their elderly parents, Raj and Mohan, and for her brother Sudhir. Raj and Mohan's age and poor health make it vital that they have the support of their children, Dinesh and Anjali. As the parents of a U.S. citizen, there are visa numbers immediately available for them. Raj and Mohan have both applied for permanent residency, and it is likely that they will have their green cards soon. However, because of the long wait in the family-based immigration system for siblings, it will take approximately twelve years before Sudhir will be able to obtain permanent residency based on his sister's petition.

It is simply impossible for Sudhir to wait twelve years outside of the U.S. without his family. He requires assistance with everyday tasks of life, including shaving, bathing, and dressing. Sudhir requires constant care and cannot be on his own for even one day, much less twelve years. He cannot live on his own, and would be subject to physical abuse and exploitation in his home country because of his disability. Raj and Mohan's own poor health prevents their return to India, and in addition, the family has no relatives in India who can help care for Sudhir.

It is for the many American families like Anjali and Dinesh's that we must fix our immigration system, not eliminate pathways for families to support each other. We are opposed any efforts to limit the definition of family under current law and believe that U.S. citizens deserve to be able to reunite with adult children and their siblings. A practical, humane and well-functioning family-based immigration system is keep to supporting American citizens and maintaining a strong American society.

Thank you.



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JUDY CHU  
Member of Congress



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MIKE HONDA  
Member of Congress