



1145 Wilshire Blvd., Second Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 977-7500 • Fax (213) 977-7595
www.apalc.org

PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 24, 2009

Contact: Sara Sadhwani (213) 241-0241

APALC Applauds Senator Feinstein's Assistance on behalf of an Asian American Same-Sex Couple

LOS ANGELES -- On Wednesday, April 22, 2009, facing threat of deportation, Shirley Constantino Tan, a native of the Philippines, received relief when Senator Dianne Feinstein and Rep. Jackie Speier introduced a private bill (S. 867) to allow Tan to stay in the US with her U.S. citizen partner, Jay Mercado, and their twin sons.

“Shirley Tan’s case is a testament to the discrimination that exists within the immigration system,” said Sara Sadhwani, immigrant rights project director at APALC. Because same-sex marriage is not recognized by the federal government, same-sex binational couples are unable to sponsor spouses within the immigration system. “This case highlights the need for Congress to pass the Uniting American Families Act, which would expand the definition of families to include same-sex partners.”

“Family unity is an essential value to the Asian American community as well as for the immigration system,” said Karin Wang, Vice President of Programs at APALC. “It would be tragic for Shirley Tan to be separated from her partner of 23 years or from their 12-year old twin sons, simply because of her sexual orientation.”

APALC is urging Senator Feinstein and the entire California Congressional Delegation to support the Uniting American Families Act, which would allow US Citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-sex partners for immigration. Concerned community members should contact Senator Feinstein’s office ((310) 914-7300) and ask her to support this legislation.

###