**Judiciary Omnibus Bill Hearing | Apr 5 | 8:30am**

*Rebecca Chang (MN8)*

Good morning Chair, Vice-chair, and committee members.

My name is Rebecca Chang and I am the Organizing Director of MN8. MN8 provides support to Southeast Asian Americans and their loved ones who are impacted by detention and deportation.

I am here today to strongly urge you to include a provision to expand post-conviction relief options in the judiciary omnibus bill. I want to ground us in our shared values of freedom, family, and opportunity as I share my comments today.

Many of the individuals who MN8 works with came to the United States as refugees after the Vietnam War. They arrived as children to this country that was an unfamiliar place with a language they did not know. They and their families often lived in disinvested neighborhoods and experienced discrimination and racial profiling on top of challenges adjusting to a new country. It is in this context that the individuals who we work with made mistakes.

Our federal immigration laws have changed drastically since when these mistakes happened, so, many times, these individuals and their lawyers advising them had no idea their actions could lead to future deportation.

Our clients took responsibility for their actions, and years later, had successful and fulfilling jobs, got married, had U.S. citizen children and grandchildren.

For example last year, you heard from community member Damu Vang speaking about his father, and Minh Lam speaking about her husband. Both of them shared how important their loved one was to them, and the harmful impact that deportation would have on their families.

Deportation is a double punishment for community members, especially because these individuals would be deported to a country where they don’t know the language and where they have no family or friends at all.

I advocate for you to think about values of redemption and humanity for all. Please include post-conviction relief in the judiciary omnibus bill so these individuals have an opportunity to contest faulty convictions through post-conviction relief and remain with their families.

Thank you for your time.