Reproductive Justice & Immigration Reform:
Fighting for Health, Dignity and Justice for Immigrant Women and Communities

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NAPAWF is the only national, multi-issue Asian and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women's organization in the country. NAPAWF's mission is to build a movement to advance social justice and human rights for API women and girls.
The mission of NLIRH is to ensure the fundamental human right to reproductive health and justice for Latinas, their families and their communities through public education, community mobilization and policy advocacy.
Goals of Presentation

- Explore the reproductive justice framework
- Discuss how immigration is a matter of reproductive justice
- Examine opportunities and challenges in the current immigration reform fight
Reproductive Justice is a social movement rooted in the belief that all individuals and communities should have the
resources and power they need to make their own decisions about their bodies, genders, sexualities, families, and lives.
Reproductive Justice Origins

Started by women of color who saw a need for expanding the reproductive rights movement to be more inclusive.

Integrates reproductive rights, human rights and social justice.

Given a name in 1994.

Intersectionality
National Coalition for Immigrant Women’s Rights (NCIWR)

Coalition of 83 grassroots and national advocacy organizations dedicated to defending and promoting equality for all immigrant women and their families living and working in the United States.

More info: www.nciwr.org
Women = 51% of the immigrant population

About 13% of total U.S. Population

Immigrant women are entrepreneurs

Drive success at work, at home, in their communities.
Key Reproductive Justice Issues in Immigration

- **Attacks on reproduction for fear-mongering**
  Accusing immigrant women of having “anchor babies”

- **Raising a family with dignity and respect**
  Family unity, ending harmful detention and deportation practice, recognizing all family structures

- **Access to reproductive health care**
  Removing waiting periods for affordable health insurance

- **Freedom from violence**
  Protections from sexual harassment at work, interactions with law enforcement
Attacks on reproduction for fear-mongering

- Anti-immigrant lawmakers and pundits attack immigrant women’s reproductive decisions

- Lawmakers have called for changing the 14th Amendment of the Constitution
Damaging Rhetoric Creates Stigma, Drives Harmful Policy
"As a result of this perverse incentive, an entire 'anchor baby' industry has developed which exploits a legal loophole caused by a misinterpretation of the Constitution. Many of these illegal aliens are giving birth to children in the United States so that they can have uninhibited access to taxpayer funded benefits and to citizenship for as many family members as possible."

Rep Steve King (R-IA)
Connections Between Anti-choice & Anti-immigrant Rhetoric, Organizations

El lugar más peligroso para un LATINO es el vientre de su madre.
The most dangerous place for a LATINO is in the womb.

www.unidosporlavida.org.mx
Family Separation

- President Obama will have deported 2 million people by end of year—more than all administrations from 1892-1997.

- Child custody cases

- Criminalizing re-entries
Heteronormativity & Patriarchal Families

- Current immigration laws do not recognize all family structures, relationships
- Do not promote economic empowerment of all family members (H1-B visas)
Health Coverage and Care

- Growth of immigrant communities framed as a “drain” on government resources → relies on myths and misinformation

- Result:
  - 5 year bar
  - Emergency Medicaid only
  - High rates of uninsurance
  - “Unborn child option”

Geneses is in first grade. Her family works hard and is committed to the American dream. Shouldn’t they be included in our health care plan like their friends and neighbors?

#HealthJustice #HealthyDream
We can't wait 15 years for healthcare.
Health & Human Rights in Detention

- Lack of access to basic reproductive and sexual health care
  - E.g.: contraception, breast pumps, abortion, cervical cancer screenings

- Shackling of pregnant women

- Trans/gender non-conforming detainees placed in solitary confinement; denied gender-affirming health care
Working conditions for new immigrants

- Without work authorization, few opportunities (including for partners of lawfully present immigrants)
- Labor exploitation, including sexual harassment
- Poverty
- Unsafe conditions, often exposed to toxic chemicals that harm the reproductive system
- No benefits, leave, or health coverage

http://www.lclaa.org
Freedom from violence

- Programs that entangle local law enforcement with immigration make women and LGBTQ people unsafe.

- Profiling – racial, gender, esp. trans people of color.
Update on CIR Debate & RJ

I’m fighting for health
#4immigrantwomen
nciwr.wordpress.com
Resources

- National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum
  - www.napawf.org

- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
  - www.latinainstitute.org

- National Coalition for Immigrant Women’s Rights
  - www.NCIWR.org

- Others
  - Detention Watch Network
  - Rights Working Group
  - Casa de Esperanza (IPV issues)
  - LGBT: Undocuqueer, Immigration Equality, Out for Immigration, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, National Center for Transgender Equality