



Dear News Media Representatives:

There's a term being used frequently by the White House and others that is both incorrect terminology and outright derogatory. Likely you will hear the term "chain migration" when President Trump delivers his State of the Union speech.

Please refrain from using this term in your news segments about immigration reform. Family-based immigration is the proper term that is used by the Department of Homeland Security and it originated from the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. There are a few other terms such as family reunification, family-based sponsorship, or family preference categories that accurately describe this portion of our immigration system.

Our family-based immigration system has served this country very well since it was created under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 that put an end to a racist quota system. Since enactment, this system has been referred to as family-based immigration. The State Department and the Department of Homeland Security use the terms family-based and family preference immigrants, though this administration had introduced the term "chain migration" in some government documents.

The administration uses the offensive term of "chain migration" as a means to avoid using the word family and to dehumanize immigration for the public. Terms like the one used by the administration are dog whistles to the white supremacists signaling that they are trying to keep out people of color.

The attempts to dismantle the system are unnecessary and will diminish the diversity that is part of the American fabric of our country. Moreover, our current immigration system has allowed this country to be dynamic and innovative. Our economy has grown because of immigrants, including family members who have helped to expand businesses, provide capital, or take care of loved ones while others worked.

Family is an intrinsic part of our American values. A value that is shared no matter the color of your skin, your cultural background, or religious beliefs. Families are bonded by love, not "chains."

We ask that you do not let another newscast go forward where your viewers, listeners, and readers hear or see the term "chain migration." It is a marketing term that we would argue is propaganda, used by the Trump administration that is meant to dehumanize immigrants and demonize the same immigration system that brought many of your ancestors and ours to America.

Sincerely,

John C. Yang  
President and Executive Director  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC