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**Jersey City, Reading, San Francisco, and San Jose Join Cities for Citizenship**

*National Campaign Led by Mayors to Increase Citizenship Among Eligible LPRs*

NEW YORK *–* Today, Cities for Citizenship is announcing that almost 20 cities have joined the major initiative aimed at increasing citizenship among eligible U.S. legal permanent residents (LPRs) to forge more inclusive and economically robust cities. Reading, Pennsylvania, San Francisco, California, Jersey City, New Jersey, and San Jose, California are the 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th members, respectively. Other member cities include: Atlanta; Baltimore; Boston; Chattanooga; Chicago; Denver; Los Angeles; Nashville; New York; Milwaukee; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; Seattle; and Washington, DC.

“We look forward to working with Cities for Citizenship as we establish programs to distribute relevant information that welcomes immigrants and eases their path to citizenship,” commented **Mayor Vaughn D. Spencer of Reading, Pennsylvania**.

“San Francisco is proud to join cities from across the country to support immigrants and citizenship. Our participation in C4C will enhance our robust San Francisco Pathways to Citizenship Initiative, a local public/private/nonprofit partnership launched in 2013 by Mayor Ed Lee. We know that the diversity, creativity and spirit of immigrants help drive local economies and strengthen all of us,” said **Adrienne Pon, Executive Director of the San Francisco Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs**.

“Our evolution over the past 50 years, from an agricultural community to become the world’s leading center of technology innovation is attributed to the entrepreneurial spirit of the people of San Jose, who have come to reside here from all corners of the world and together have grown our economy and our cultural heritage,” said **Mayor Sam Liccardo of San Jose, California**. “The success of San Jose relies in good measure on facilitating citizenship for our immigrant population. By joining Cities for Citizenship we will be able to provide the assistance needed to ensure that San Jose’s immigrants can achieve their naturalization goals.

Cities for Citizenship enables cities to expand naturalization and financial capability programs, as well as access to legal assistance, microloans and financial counseling, boosting economic opportunity for immigrants and communities nationwide. Resources are available online at CitiesforCitizenship.org.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio chair Cities for Citizenship. Citi is the founding corporate partner, and is contributing $1.15 million to the effort, which is coordinated by two leading non-profit partners, the Center for Popular Democracy and the National Partnership for New Americans. Since the launch of Cities for Citizenship in November of 2014, participating cities, working with community-based organizations, have planned dozens of citizenship workshops, financial literacy courses, civic engagement programs, and oath ceremonies to help hundreds of immigrants across the country naturalize.

“NPNA is pleased to see the expanding roster of cities joining the Cities for Citizenship initiative,” says **Nicole Melaku, Director of Programs at the National Partnership for New Americans**. “Our members have worked diligently on naturalization capacity building for the past several years are encouraged by the complimentary list of cities working toward implementing and expanding programs to reduce the barriers to citizenship. Cities are key partners in providing reliable information and creating greater access to high quality naturalization application assistance.”

“We are thrilled by the rapid growth of Cities for Citizenship,” said **Shena Elrington, Director of Immigrant Rights and Racial Justice Policy at the Center for Popular Democracy**. “Now, more than ever, cities are demonstrating their commitment to promoting citizenship and building inclusive cities. Our growth means that cities across the country, big and small, are taking action to unleash the value of citizenship.”

“Citizenship is an economic asset that enables low-income immigrants to build more stable economic futures. We believe that building a national identity must go hand-in-hand with building a strong financial identity,” said **Bob Annibale, Global Director of Citi Community Development.** “We are proud to work with the mayors of these cities to grow this initiative, which will lead to direct economic benefits for immigrant families and their communities.”

There are currently 8.8 million legal permanent residents in America who are eligible for citizenship. These are documented residents, who pay taxes and work lawfully, but 52% of whom remain low-income. Their naturalization would provide access to better paying jobs (up to an 11% increase to their personal earnings), academic scholarships, and a myriad of other benefits. It would also provide a $37 billion to $52 billion lift to the national economy over the next ten years, according to “Citizenship: A Wise Investment for Cities,” available at <http://on.citi.us/1oPWemB>.

Cities for Citizenship will connect mayors and municipalities with immigrant organizations and the business, faith and labor communities in public-private partnerships.

Follow the initiative on Twitter with #Cities4Citizenship.

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**About Center for Popular Democracy (CPD)**
The Center for Popular Democracy (CPD) promotes equity, opportunity, and a dynamic democracy in partnership with base-building organizations, organizing networks and alliances, and progressive unions across the country. CPD builds the strength and capacity of democratic organizations to envision and advance a pro-worker, pro-immigrant, racial and economic justice agenda. Visit www.populardemocracy.org and [www.twitter.com/popdemoc](http://www.twitter.com/popdemoc).

**About National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA)**

[The National Partnership for New Americans](http://statevoices.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?key=-1&url_num=15&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.partnershipfornewamericans.org%2F" \t "_blank) (NPNA) harnesses the collective power and resources of the country’s 34 largest regional immigrant rights organizations in 29 states. Our aim is to achieve a vibrant, just and welcoming democracy for all. Immigrants are the soul of our organization, and immigrant communities inspire, implement and champion our work. NPNA sponsors the annual National Immigrant Integration Conference and, in the past two years, NPNA partners have assisted over 50,000 immigrants to become U.S. citizens and pursue legal status. Additional information may be found at [www.partnershipfornewamericans.org](http://www.partnershipfornewamericans.org) | NIIC: integrationconference.org Facebook: [www.facebook.com/newamericanspartnership](http://www.facebook.com/newamericanspartnership) | Twitter: [@npnewamericans](https://twitter.com/npnewamericans)

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