

WASHINGTON

Jan. 20, 2017

We, the officers of the Migrant Heritage Commission (MHC), a non-profit, non-partisan organization which champions the rights of migrants, and humanity in general, to a better life and brighter future, extend our warmest congratulations to President-elect Donald Trump.

We wish him well, for his success as the nation's President is linked to the success of this great nation. Lao-tzu, an Asian philosopher said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." When Mr. Trump is inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States on January 20, he will embark on a journey of several thousands of miles. At the helm of the Ship of State, he will need to heal and unite a divided country in order to reach a destination worthy of our cherished principles and ideals.

This year's campaign has exposed a deeply polarized nation, not a United States of America. It is time, however, to set aside partisanship and unite with our next President and a new set of leaders for a better future. There is no other direction for all of us but to MOVE FORWARD. This is what AMERICA IS ALL ABOUT.

The people have spoken. On November 8, Americans voted with their hearts and minds, and upheld a great American tradition which is the envy of the world: A peaceful transfer of power through the ballot box. Now we live by the principles when America was first founded, IN GOD WE TRUST. And we should resolve to unite as one America. Not as Republicans, not as Democrats, not as Independents – but as Americans.

With this in mind, we at the Migrant Heritage Commission hereby voice our concerns and aspirations for this great nation under the leadership of President Trump.

1. We hope and pray that President-elect Trump will truly be a President “for all Americans,” as he asserted on Election night – regardless of race, ethnicity, ancestry, political creed, religion, religious beliefs and gender orientation.

We are hopeful that with campaigning now over, he will focus on governing with dedication. We look forward to applauding worthy foreign and domestic policies and programs under the Trump Administration. At the same time, we will be vigilant and we will provide constructive criticisms. We will resist policies and programs that are anti-immigrant and anti-humanity, and our concerted efforts with other national groups and individuals will be strong and principled to end racism, racial prejudice, misogyny and bigotry.

2. We hope and pray that President Trump will acknowledge the aspirations of other countries and other peoples, for the presidency of the United States confers on him the mantle of the Leader of the Free World as well. We want our President and set of leaders to uphold our most cherished values of freedom, liberty, justice and equality for all and respect for human dignity.

3. We respect the ongoing protests across the nation as people exercise their fundamental right to free speech, peacefully and in non-violent ways. We hope and pray that their hearts and minds will be healed in the spirit of reconciliation. We hope that in moving forward, we recognize the people's rights to express legitimate dissent and grievances peacefully and with full respect to our duly constituted authorities.

4. We hope and pray that if President Trump decides to build a wall as part of securing our borders, that he considers building a bridge over that wall and a big door in the middle of it. Because the essence of America is that it has one big heart for immigrants. Indeed, America is great because it is a Nation of Immigrants. For years, immigrants have been contributing to its progress in science and technology, business, and arts and cultures, among other fields.

In our advocacy for immigrant rights, we shall continue to demand and campaign for a sound, reasonable comprehensive immigration policy based on the principles that immigration is about economic opportunities and progress, family unity and humanity.

We shall resist immigration policies against these principles. We are heartened by recent news. President-elect Trump has modified his campaign rhetoric of mass deportation of the nation's 11 million undocumented, over 500,000 of whom are Filipinos, declaring on CBS' "60 Minutes" that his focus would be on some 2 million to 3 million convicted felons, which is actually the current policy under the Obama Administration. Incoming White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus told MSNBC-TV the day after the election that President-elect Trump "is not calling for mass deportation," or a rollback of President Barack Obama's executive actions on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children.

We hope and pray that it will be the same with another campaign rhetoric, that the Trump Administration will not ban the entry of immigrants from countries with a history of terrorism, which includes the Philippines.

5. We hope and pray that our advocacy role, to effect economic and social change in our country which are people-oriented and will create opportunities for our families and the future of the next generation, is enduring and long-term. In fact, we view the end of the election period as our starting point to continue pressing for national policies and programs that unite America and not divide us.

Certainly, we want to help build a United America that practices tolerance and respect for the basic principles of humanity, and universal aspirations for a brighter tomorrow. After all, as the most powerful nation on earth, America is known as a beacon of democracy, with its cherished values and traditions. It is imperative and necessary that patriotic, freedom-loving and peace-loving Americans and migrants should now reconcile with the past and resolve to unite, for only in such coming together can we Move Forward to a Better Future. Ever since the birth of this great nation, this has always been the American Way.

January 20th, 2017

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