



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **New Federal Regulation Protects Against Discrimination in Health Care**

*Ensures Meaningful Access for Millions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders*

**WASHINGTON** – Today, [Action for Health Justice](#) (AHJ) applauds the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services final regulation implementing Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in health care by certain covered entities. AHJ works to educate, enroll, and empower Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AA and NHPI).

"We have worked to enroll and connect people to health care during the last three Open Enrollment periods and have provided language assistance to those who cannot speak English well," said Doreena Wong of Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles and AHJ co-chair. "Section 1557, the ACA's civil rights protection has, and will continue to, greatly benefit Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and others who face barriers to health care. All people should be able to access health care, no matter what language they speak."

During the first three open enrollment periods, AHJ partners worked in 24 states and reached nearly one million AA and NHPI individuals to provide ACA outreach, education, and enrollment assistance. AHJ partners connected with people in many ways and provided assistance in over 50 languages. Through all interactions, language and immigration status were and continue to be some of the major barriers to enrollment for AA and NHPI communities. The finalized regulation implementing Section 1557 of the ACA is extremely important to ensure that limited English proficient individuals and immigrants have access to health insurance coverage through the health insurance marketplaces, as well as access to health care services once they obtain coverage.

Action for Health Justice partners filed official [comments](#) in November 2015 to the Office for Civil Rights at HHS supporting and providing recommendations on the regulation's language access protections and improved data collection and reporting requirements.

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[Action for Health Justice](#) is a collaborative leading a major national outreach initiative to maximize enrollment for AAs and NHPs and build the capacity to empower community-based organizations to serve and advocate for AA and NHPI health. Members include: Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Los Angeles, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF), and Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO).