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AAPCHO Applauds Proposed Immigration Policy Reform Bill

OAKLAND, April 17, 2013 – The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) today applauded a bipartisan Senate group for its work on an immigration reform bill to overhaul the country's outdated immigration system.

The proposed bill, which aims to update and streamline current immigration laws, includes provisions that provide aspiring Americans with opportunities to earn U.S. citizenship and protects worker rights. The proposed bill was introduced this morning.

"We commend the senators for their efforts to create a common sense immigration process," said Jeffrey Caballero, executive director of AAPCHO. "We are pleased that the bill allows aspiring citizens to contribute to this country's culture and prosperity, and we are committed to working with Congress and the administration to ensure the legislation incorporates additional measures that further the interest of all Americans."

This legislation will have a profound impact on the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (AA&NHOP) community. In recent years, Asians have become the largest demographic of new immigrants moving to the U.S., and AA&NNHOPs make up the fastest growing population in the country. Of the estimated 4.3 million people in the family immigration backlog in 2012, nearly half were from Asian countries, and over 40 percent of all family-based visas in 2010 were sponsored by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

While the proposed bill is a step in the right direction, AAPCHO urges legislators to reverse the reduction of family visa categories and include measures that expand access to health care coverage to immigrants. Immigration reform that includes access to preventive care would lower long-term health care costs, improve public health, and strengthen the social safety net by allowing healthy individuals to participate in the health insurance market.

"AAPCHO believes everyone, whether citizen or immigrant, has the right to quality, affordable health care," Mr. Caballero stated, adding, "Common sense immigration reform provides us with an opportunity to accomplish this."

About AAPCHO

AAPCHO is a national association of 29 community health organizations dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration, and leadership that improves the health status and access of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islanders in the U.S. For more information on AAPCHO and its Guiding Principles and Values, please visit www.aapcho.org. AAPCHO can also be found on Facebook (www.facebook.com/aapcho), Twitter (@aapchotweets), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/aapcho).

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