



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 24, 2014

Contact:
Stacy Lavilla
Director of Communications, AAPCHO
(510) 272-9536 x110
slavilla@aapcho.org

AAPCHO Responds to President Obama's Executive Action on Immigration

Urges Congress to Pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform to Support Immigrant Health

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 24, 2014 – The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) commends President Obama's decision to take executive action to reform immigration policy. The President's new immigration plan, announced last week, will provide administrative relief to protect nearly 5 million undocumented immigrants from deportation.

The President's Immigration Accountability Executive Action consists of key policy changes, including "deferred action" programs to shield undocumented immigrants from deportation and allow them to apply for work permits if they meet certain requirements.

While the President's plan is an important step in the right direction, AAPCHO remains concerned that the barriers to health care for these aspiring citizens will remain. Removal of these barriers, such as denying these individuals from receiving federal healthcare subsidies or from applying for public programs like Medicaid, will allow immigrant families and workers to more fully contribute to the American Dream and invest in our country's future health. We support the administration's steps towards comprehensive immigration reform that values families and works to keep them together. We now look to Congress to pass legislation that ensures that immigrants have equal access to health care to enable them to thrive and continue to contribute to all communities.

Currently, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans make up about 1.3 million of the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants residing in the United States and stand to benefit from the President's plan. "We commend the President for taking action while Members of Congress continue to block commonsense immigration reform," said Jeffrey Caballero, executive director of AAPCHO, adding, "We look forward to continue to work with Congress to pass legislation that will expand health care access to all immigrants, whether lawfully present or Compact of Free Association migrants, and put us on the path to a healthier, stronger nation."

"Denying anyone equal access to healthcare and healthcare subsidies is the wrong way to protect America's public health. Facilitating access to health care for immigrants is a necessary step. A move in this direction will result in potential reimbursement rates that will make it sustainable for community health centers and other safety net hospitals to provide services for all, saving billions in emergency room care and lowering costs for everyone," he said.

AAPCHO will continue to advocate for equal access to health care for all individuals, regardless of their immigration status. We remain committed to the needs of our communities and look forward to continuing to work with the administration and Congress as these reforms are implemented.

About AAPCHO

AAPCHO is a national association of 35 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 United States. For more information on AAPCHO and its Guiding Principles and Values, please visit www.aapcho.org.

###