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AAPCHO Urges Congress to Vote No on Medicaid Cuts That Would Impede Progress to Health Equity

WASHINGTON – Congressional Leadership is currently considering legislation that would greatly harm communities already disparately impacted by health disparities and health access limitations. In response to the Senate vote on the motion to proceed to debate health care repeal legislation, the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) urges Congress to reject Medicaid cuts that would impede access to care for millions of people.

As a nonpartisan, national not-for-profit organization that represents health centers serving nearly 500,000 Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AA&NHPIs) and other underserved communities, AAPCHO sees access to effective and preventive primary care as a key building block to health equity. AAPCHO members are located in states where Medicaid cuts would have severe impact. With its members, AAPCHO fights for a system of care that works for everyone and one that takes into account the diverse needs of all communities. AA&NHPIs are the fastest growing racial and ethnic group in the United States. Medicaid allows AA&NHPIs to give back to their communities in tangible and meaningful ways. AAPCHO urges Congress to continue to support the crucial access for these and so many communities who would not be served otherwise.

Investing in health equity means supporting where care is needed most. “Medicaid is essential to allow our patients to live a happy, healthy and productive life,” said Dr. Andrea Caracostis, CEO of AAPCHO member health center HOPE Clinic in Houston. “We serve many patients who look to us for in-language assistance and coordinated care that they cannot receive elsewhere. Medicaid allows us to meet their needs as soon as possible. Shifts in Medicaid would lead to cuts to our programming and ultimately to our service delivery.” HOPE Clinic is able to serve patients in 14 languages and address disparities due to investments in staff and services only possible through Medicaid.

Medicaid allows patients to thrive in challenging circumstances and give back to communities. “Our patients are primarily Vietnamese and Latinos who came to New Orleans East to help with rebuilding the local economy after Katrina. With Medicaid support, our clinic is able to support our patients and give back to the local community, allowing us to be more sustainable,” said Diem Nguyen, CEO of AAPCHO member health center NOELA Community Health Center health center in New Orleans. Many health centers are the on-the-ground support in states of emergency, including during natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina, and Medicaid cuts would put their ability to mobilize during these times at risk.

Medicaid is essential for health centers, providing the largest source of revenue. Medicaid allows health centers to serve vulnerable communities, with culturally and linguistically appropriate care, in an affordable and accessible manner. AAPCHO stands with its members in urging Congress to protect Medicaid and invest in health equity. All children and families deserve access to effective and appropriate care regardless of where they live, and their income level.

About AAPCHO

AAPCHO is a national association of community health organizations dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration and leadership that improves the health status and access of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. For more information on AAPCHO, please visit www.aapcho.org.

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