

WASHINGTON DC (Today) - Rep Michael Honda, Chairman of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, issued the following statement in response to the US House of Representative's healthcare vote on March 21, 2010: "Yesterday's historic vote gives us the road map to reform. Americans have been vocal and consistent in their calls for changes to our health care system that will stop the abuses of insurance industries, bring down costs, increase quality and access and provide a measure of stability to their families.

Without health reform, our employment-based health insurance system frequently meant that the loss of a job led to the loss of health insurance coverage and raised very real possibility of bankruptcy and financial ruin for families unfortunate enough to experience health crisis during that vulnerable time.

Without health reform, small businesses and individuals would continue to face skyrocketing, unsustainable increases in the cost of their plans.

This reform effort will improve access for the people of my district, the 15th Congressional District, and our nation as a whole. In my district alone, up to 86,000 families and 14,900 small businesses will receive tax credits and other assistance to help them afford coverage; 47,000 young adults will be able to obtain coverage; 18 community clinics - the safety nets of our region - will receive millions of dollars in new funding; coverage will be extended to 22,500 uninsured residents; and finally, the bill reduce the cost of uncompensated care for our hospitals and other health care providers by \$113 million annually.

Although I have supported and will continue to support even more robust efforts to make deeper changes in our health care system, I believe that this is a necessary and effective response to the dire need in my district and many across the country.

In passing this reconciliation bill, the House is not only acting to reform our health care system, we're making an investment in education at the same time. In this bill we end the privatization of federal student loans.

This will save the taxpayer \$61 billion dollars over ten years, \$13.5 billion of which will go toward paying down the national debt, and ensure that bankers aren't making profits off the backs of people working to improve their lives and advance their education.

As a staunch supporter of higher education and a believer in the need for health reform I am proud to support this legislation."