

WASHINGTON, DC – On Saturday, April 18, in a crowded community room at St. Victor’s Church in San Jose, Rep. Michael Honda (D-CA) and Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) hosted San Jose’s faith-based communities in a national effort, spanning 20 major U.S. cities, to document immigrant testimonies across the nation. These testimonials will set the stage for President Barack Obama’s comprehensive immigration reform agenda.

This was the first event of the 20-city tour to highlight voices of the Asian Pacific Islander community, including testimonials from Filipina and Thai Americans. Rep. Honda, chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, was joined by Rep. Gutierrez, chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) Immigration Task Force, and California’s religious community to spearhead this "Family Unity" outreach event in San Jose. The San Jose leg of the national tour took place at St. Victor’s Church, 3108 Sierra Rd, San Jose, CA.

“It’s time for Asian Pacific Islander voices to be heard in the immigration debate,” said Rep. Michael Honda (CA-15), chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC). “At a national level, immigrant stories of Asian Pacific Islander communities are too often left out. These testimonials that we heard here in San Jose and around the country are critical as President Obama builds his case for comprehensive immigration reform in May, which happens to be Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I will bring to Washington these stories of family hardship, stifled futures of bright students, and decades of family separation.”

This national effort involves prayer vigils and town-hall meetings. At each event, U.S. citizens share testimony as to how their families have been or risk being torn apart by a broken immigration system. The Family Unity outreach tour has already visited Providence, RI, Atlanta, GA, Albuquerque, NM, Ontario, CA, San Francisco, CA, Los Angeles, CA, Phoenix AZ, El Paso, TX, Dallas, TX, Mission, TX, Chicago, IL, Joliet IL, Milwaukee, WI, Detroit, MI, Orlando FL, Miami, FL and Philadelphia, PA, where thousands of individuals have filled their community churches to capacity. They came forward to demonstrate the vast numbers of American families—from all political backgrounds and faiths—who demand change from a legal system that undermines family values.

“Immigrant contributions have always driven America’s growth, and today’s economy presents no different a picture,” said Rep. Honda. “Reuniting immigrant families will strengthen the American economy by increasing our tax base, decreasing the costs of social safety nets, and keeping money in the U.S. that would otherwise be sent abroad to loved ones. Hate and xenophobia are keeping us from doing what’s right for our nation. It’s time to enact immigration reform that makes sense for families and for our country.”

"Through this listening tour, I have been honored and humbled to join people of all faiths from coast to coast who are bearing witness to stories of human crisis caused by our broken immigration system," said Rep. Gutierrez. "They are parents and children, husbands and wives who have been torn apart by a system that values fear over family values. Through the Family Unity effort, US citizens are raising their voices for a better vision of America, and they are showing Washington just how serious the situation has become and how serious we are about changing it. I am proud to join the people of Salinas and San Jose as they stand up to show our leaders in Washington that immigration is not an abstract policy debate — but a pressing moral crisis."

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The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) is a bicameral and bipartisan caucus of Members of Congress of Asian and Pacific Islander descent and Members who have a strong dedication to promoting the well-being of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Founded in 1994 by then Congressman Norman Mineta, and currently chaired by Congressman Michael Honda, CAPAC has been addressing the needs of the AAPI community in all areas of American life. For more information on CAPAC, please call (202) 225-2631 or visit <http://www.honda.house.gov/capac> .