

WASHINGTON, DC – Yesterday, President Obama signed an executive order reestablishing the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). This year marks the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Initiative, which was created by President Clinton to improve the quality of life in underserved AAPI communities through increased participation in federal programs.

CAPAC Members issued the following statements regarding President Obama's commitment to the AAPI community by restoring the Initiative:

“On behalf of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, we are thankful for President Obama's leadership in reestablishing the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders,” **said Rep. Michael Honda (CA-15), chair of CAPAC.** “He has restored its broad mission to ensure that all federal agencies are addressing the needs of underserved Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. The co-chairs of the Initiative, Secretaries Gary Locke and Arne Duncan, as well as Under Secretary Martha Kanter who will oversee the work of the Initiative, all have a deep understanding of the challenges faced by our communities. CAPAC members are looking forward to working in close collaboration with the Initiative as we have in past administrations.”

Executive Board Member Senator Daniel K. Akaka (HI) said, “President Obama has reopened the White House to those underserved in our Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. I look forward to working with Secretaries Locke and Duncan as they lead a diverse commission of talented individuals dedicated to empowering AAPIs.”

Senator Daniel K. Inouye (HI), an executive board member of CAPAC said, “I commend President Obama for restoring the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders make up nearly half of Hawaii's population and this commitment reinforces our nation's many efforts to extend federal services to segments of these societies that may be underserved. Ensuring that members of these communities have sufficient, unfettered access to federal programs will undoubtedly create countless opportunities for future leaders.”

"I applaud President Obama for signing today's executive order that restores the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders," **said Rep. Neil Abercrombie (HI-01), chair of CAPAC's Immigration Taskforce.**

"Today's signing is a reminder that much more needs to be done to assist underserved communities throughout the country. We are fortunate to have a President who understands our communities and is committed to ensuring the needs of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are not forgotten."

CAPAC Secretary Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo (GU) said, "I commend President Obama for restoring the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The signing of the executive order today signifies the Administration's renewed commitment to the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. As the representative of one of the largest Asian American and Pacific Islander districts and a U.S. Territory, I look forward to working with Secretary Locke, Secretary Duncan, and my colleagues in the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus as the Initiative begins to address many important issues facing the Asian American and Pacific Islander community nationwide."

"Today in America, 38.7 percent of Asian Americans and 37.8 percent of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders lack employer-based health coverage. Asian American children are also more likely to be uninsured, with a rate of 11.5 percent, compared to 7.3 for Non-Hispanic White children," **said Congressman Xavier Becerra (CA-31), CAPAC executive board member.** "The restoration of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders comes at a time when urgent needs, like health care, need to be addressed. President Obama is following a commitment he made to the AAPI community, and I stand ready to work with him to address their needs."

Executive Board Member Rep. Judy Chu (CA-32) said, "The news of the President's signing of the Executive Order to revive the White House Initiative on AAPIs comes at a timely juncture, where important legislation, such as health care reform, is being formed and shaped. This initiative will be critical in addressing the needs of underserved Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. I appreciate the President's commitment to AAPI communities, and I look forward to working with my CAPAC colleagues and the Administration on the efforts of this initiative."

CAPAC Vice Chair Rep. Eni Faleomavaega (AS) said, “I applaud President Obama for restoring the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Today’s signing comes at a critical juncture when the country as a whole begins to address many issues of great significance to the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities across the nation.”

Rep. Al Green (TX-09), chair of CAPAC’s Housing Taskforce said, “As we prepare to deal with the most pressing issues of our time, from healthcare to financial regulatory reform, the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders will ensure that Asian American and Pacific Islanders have a meaningful role to play in substantive policy issues affecting our community. This White House Initiative recognizes the diversity of Asian American and Pacific Islanders in the United States, and the extent to which they contribute to a meaningful national dialogue on the formation of effective public policy. I congratulate President Obama on the creation of this executive office and am certain that the time for meaningful change for our communities has now come.”

“I appreciate President Obama’s commitment to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by reestablishing a vigorous White House Initiative that will work closely with our community. Education is a priority issue for me in the Congress and I am especially glad that the White House Initiative will be jointly led by the Department of Education for the first time in its history. It is a great pleasure to work with a President who is attuned to the fact that Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have unique needs and issues that deserve a greater level of attention. I look forward to working with Co-Chairs Duncan and Locke in ensuring the success of this renewed effort,” **said Rep. Mazie K. Hirono (HI-02), an executive board member of CAPAC.**

“President Obama’s support for the AAPI community is clear, and I applaud his efforts in restoring the broad mission of White House Initiative on AAPIs,” **said Rep. Doris Matsui (CA-05), executive board member of CAPAC.**

“As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of President Clinton’s creation of this historic initiative, I look forward to working with Secretaries Locke and Duncan to improve the lives of AAPI communities across the country. We are committed to dedicating ourselves to helping the underserved and undernourished regardless of race, creed, or color.”

Executive Board Member Rep. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan (CNMI) said, “President Obama made a commitment to restore the AAPI initiative. Today he has kept his promise to Asian American and Pacific Islanders and we are all very grateful. Especially, because this is a time of great change — in health care and immigration — change that will impact our communities. Now with a voice in the White House, representing our interests, we can be assured that these successful reforms will also fulfill their promise of benefit of all Americans, including Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.”

“I commend President Obama for restoring this important White House Initiative,” **said Rep. Bobby Scott (VA-03), chair of CAPAC’s Civil Rights Taskforce.**

“Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders make significant contributions to every aspect of American society. The President’s action today makes a strong commitment to the AAPI community. The initiative ensures that the gifts, talents & values of this community will be included at the highest levels of federal policymaking.”

Rep. David Wu (OR-01), chair of CAPAC’s Education Taskforce said, "By reestablishing the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, President Obama has once again delivered on his strong commitment to our communities. I commend the Obama administration for demonstrating tremendous leadership on behalf of all AAPIs, and I look forward to working with the president, Secretary Locke, and Secretary Duncan to enhance AAPI access to and participation in federal programs where they may be underserved.”

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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> .