

Washington, DC – Today, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) strongly supported the introduction of comprehensive immigration reform legislation by Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act of 2009 (CIR ASAP) includes CAPAC's top immigration priorities, including: Ensuring a robust family reunification system, earned legalization for undocumented workers and DREAM Act students, the restoration of due process and judicial review in our immigration system, humane treatment of immigration detainees, and the integration of new American communities. CAPAC members joined a diverse coalition of Members of Congress as cosponsors to the legislation.

Major provisions of Rep. Honda's legislation, H.R. 2709, the Reuniting Families Act, were included in the Rep. Gutierrez's bill. These include the recapture of unused immigration visas from 1992-2008, the reclassification of spouses and children of lawful permanent residents as immediate relatives, and the increase of per country limits.

Rep. Neil Abercrombie (HI-01), chair of CAPAC's immigration task force said: "I am fully committed to comprehensive immigration reform that reflects our nation's values. With 12 million undocumented immigrants and over 5 million people waiting to be reunited with their family members, we must address our broken immigration system now. I commend Rep. Gutierrez for introducing his bill and look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure passage of comprehensive immigration reform."

Rep. Judy Chu (CA-32), CAPAC executive board member who is serving on the Immigration Subcommittee said: "I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act. Immigration reform is an issue that affects both the human rights and economics of our nation. Our immigration system is broken, and we simply cannot afford to wait for the healthcare debate to finish before we act to fix it."

Rep. Al Green (TX-09), CAPAC executive board member said: "I am committed to comprehensive immigration reform which addresses the plight of millions of undocumented persons while protecting the rights of all Americans."

Also included in Rep. Gutierrez's bill is the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, H.R. 2412, introduced by Rep. Mazie Hirono (HI-02), CAPAC executive board member. Rep. Hirono's bill, which is also a part of the Reuniting Families Act, honors the contributions of World War II Filipino veterans by exempting their children from numerical limitations on immigrant visas.

Rep. Hirono said: "Our Filipino World War II veterans have waited for years to be reunited with their children who remain in the Philippines. Sadly, the window to provide these aging veterans with this meaningful benefit is rapidly closing. I appreciate that the bill includes language from the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, which I introduced this past May, as it will help bring these families together and fulfill our obligation to these war heroes. I have proudly signed on, along with 87 original cosponsors, in strong support of this comprehensive immigration reform legislation because it will mean keeping families together, creating jobs, and making our nation stronger."

Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" Camacho Sablan (MP), CAPAC executive board member said: "I want to thank Mr. Gutierrez for his leadership on this landmark legislation. The bill will help to keep families together, something that everyone should be able to agree is important to a healthy society. The bill also recognizes that people who have lived for many years in our communities and who are contributing members of our society should be treated with respect. I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of the bill and look forward to working hard for its passage."

CAPAC will work closely with all Members of Congress to see that comprehensive immigration reform legislation is enacted.

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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> .