

Washington, DC –Rep. Mike Honda, chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), issued the statement below celebrating President Obama's announcement yesterday, of Daphne Kwok as chair of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

In October 2009, President Obama signed an executive order reestablishing the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). The Initiative was created by President Clinton in 1999 to improve the quality of life in underserved AAPI communities through increased participation in federal programs.

"I am so pleased that President Obama has announced Daphne Kwok as chair of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. President Obama's announcement of Daphne Kwok as the Commission's chair is yet another demonstration of his dedication to diversity and his commitment to the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

"Daphne is a dear friend and extraordinary leader in the AAPI community. For more than two decades, the community has benefited from Daphne's committed advocacy and leadership. I am confident that she will continue to make important contributions in her new role.

"CAPAC has worked directly with Daphne and I know the passion that she holds for ensuring that AAPIs have a seat at the table and that our most vulnerable populations have equal access to federal government services. Daphne's leadership will be integral to the continued empowerment and advancement of AAPIs.

"I look forward to CAPAC's future collaborations with the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and am pleased to continue our caucus's work with Daphne in her new capacity."

Daphne Kwok has been a strong advocate and leader in the AAPI community for over twenty years. She is currently the executive director of the Asians and Pacific Islanders with Disabilities of California, and was the executive director of the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation from 2005 to 2007. From 2001 to 2005, she strengthened leadership opportunities for young leaders in the AAPI community, and was dedicated to the political empowerment of AAPIs as the executive director of the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies. Ms. Kwok also was the executive director of the Organization of Chinese Americans from 1990 to 2001, during which time she was elected as the first chair of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, a coalition of AAPI advocacy groups in Washington, DC that is integral to amplifying the voice of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities on the national stage. In 1991, Ms. Kwok was elected to the Board of Trustees of Wesleyan University, her alma mater, and was the first Asian American to serve on the Board.

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The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) is comprised 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. Since 1994, 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.hou.se.gov/capac>