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PRESS RELEASE

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APALC Celebrates Historic Vote for Health Reform

Legislation Falls Short of Meaningful Reform for Immigrants

LOS ANGELES – The Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) applauds the House of Representatives for the passage of an historic vote to overhaul the nation’s health care system. The reform will expand coverage to 32 million uninsured and bring immediate relief to children, seniors and small businesses.

“Though the bill falls short of full inclusion of all residents in accessing quality healthcare, we celebrate this momentous step forward,” said Stewart Kwoh, executive director of APALC. Despite many positive provisions, the legislation upholds restrictions and wait periods for legal permanent residents accessing Medicaid. Undocumented immigrants, of which there are an estimated 1.5 million Asian American and Pacific Islander undocumented immigrants, are completely shut out of the reforms, being denied even the opportunity to purchase full cost insurance.

“For too long, low and middle income families have fallen through the cracks when trying to access quality, affordable health coverage,” said Sara Sadhwani, immigrant rights project director at APALC. “This victory is a win for many Asian American and Pacific Islander communities who suffer from high rates of uninsured.” The proposal will require citizens to have coverage, but will also provide a series of industry reforms to help people meet that requirement.

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