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AAPCHO Urges Congress to Support Key Programs for AA&NHPI-Serving Health Centers

As the deadline to reinstate the federal budget approaches, programs affecting health centers and the millions of people they serve must be restored

WASHINGTON – The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) today released the following statement ahead of the December 8 deadline for Congress to pass a spending bill and avoid government shutdown—urging members of Congress to take immediate steps to reinstate funding for community health centers and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and to pass legislation to protect “Dreamers” by the end of the year. The programs and services at-risk are essential to the millions of people served by community health centers, including medically underserved Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AA&NHPIs).

Funding for the Health Center Program and CHIP expired in September. AAPCHO members and other community health centers in the country are now facing drastic cuts that will cause essential services to be discontinued, potentially leaving millions without access to care in a matter of weeks. In addition, no agreement has been reached to pass legislation to protect and ensure a path to citizenship for undocumented young adults known as “Dreamers,” including current Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients whose program was recently rescinded.

“We remain incredibly concerned and frustrated that Congress has not taken action to fund and support key programs that our member center patients rely on,” said Jeffrey Caballero, executive director of AAPCHO. “Cuts to health center and CHIP funding, as well as threats to essential services, are already affecting community health centers and the patients they serve. Some sites are starting to lay off staff and cut key health programs. Ending the DACA program without providing a solution for the children and families affected is irresponsible and detrimental to the overall health of our country and the American people. We urge Congress to find a bipartisan solution without threatening access to key services essential to these vulnerable communities and without breaking families apart.”

AAPCHO remains hopeful that a continuing resolution will be passed that will support health centers, CHIP, and the needs of Dreamers. AAPCHO will continue to work with its members and partners to advocate for programs and services to improve the health status and access of AA&NHPIs, and to help Congress and policymakers to implement meaningful solutions that work for all communities, by reducing health inequities for communities of color.

About AAPCHO

AAPCHO is a national association of community health organizations dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration and leadership that improves the health status and access of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. For more information on AAPCHO, please visit www.aapcho.org.

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