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Asian American Health Leaders Oppose Potential Denial of Immigration Status to Immigrants Using Needed Critical Services

WASHINGTON – The Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF) and Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) oppose a proposed regulation that would deny permanent resident status (“green cards”) or entry into the United States to immigrants who use a wide range of needed government services, including publicly-supported health care insurance, nutrition programs, and low-income housing assistance.

“Health care providers have both a professional obligation and personal commitment to serve those in need of care,” said Jeff Caballero, AAPCHO Executive Director. “This proposed regulation would undermine the ability of America’s health care safety net to provide critical health care to low-income individuals and families,” he added.

“Immigrants always have been an essential part of America, and immigration status should not be denied because one’s family needed health care, nutrition assistance, or housing assistance,” said Kathy Ko Chin, APIAHF President and CEO. “If implemented, this proposed regulation would have a devastating impact on our Asian American communities,” she added.

The proposed regulation being prepared by the Department of Homeland Security would expand, without precedent, the list of government programs that would result in the denial of green cards or entry to the United States to persons using almost every health, nutrition, education, housing and other programs, services, and assistance available under law to U.S. residents. Even more alarming is that the proposed regulation would consider participation in programs such as Head Start and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program by U.S. citizen children as a reason to deny green cards to their immigrant parents.

Access to these vital programs and services promotes the health, economic well-being and safety of all diverse American communities. The proposed regulation perpetuates false narratives that immigrants are undesirable and a financial burden to the nation.

Of those who receive green cards each year, 40 percent are from Asia. Thus, the proposed regulation would significantly impact Asian American families and communities.

About APIAHF

The Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum influences policy, mobilizes communities, and strengthens programs and organizations to improve the health of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Learn more at www.apiahf.org.

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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