



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AAPCHO Welcomes House Passage of Legislation to Strengthen Health Access and Lower Prescription Drug Costs

WASHINGTON – The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) today released the following statement, commending the House vote to pass the Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act (H.R. 987):

“On behalf of our health center members and the more than 600,000 Asian American (AA), Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI), and other low-income patients and communities they serve, we commend the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act.

This important legislation makes strong investments in comprehensive health care and provides AA and NHPI consumers with the support they need to make informed choices about enrolling in health insurance. The legislation advances many important consumer protections—from prohibiting the sale of health insurance plans with less-than-comprehensive benefit packages, to providing additional funding to states to support their health insurance marketplaces. AAPCHO also applauds restoration of federal funding for the navigator program that has been critical to informing patients of their health insurance options.

AAPCHO members and health centers in general serve as a key source of enrollment assistance nationally. In 2017 alone, health centers assisted over 5.43 million people in their efforts to gain health care coverage, including through the federal marketplace. Unfortunately, federal funding for the navigator program has been cut by almost 85 percent over the last two years, significantly impacting assistance to AA and NHPI consumers, patients who are limited English proficient, and individuals who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act reverses those cuts and restores navigator funding and patient supports for clear, unbiased information about their health insurance options. This much-needed investment in enrollment supports will greatly benefit AA, NHPI and other low-income consumers that our health centers serve.

AAPCHO members have been leaders in outreach and enrollment efforts for health insurance marketplaces across the country, specializing in serving community members in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways. AAPCHO was proud to work with partners on the development of a first-of-its-kind [glossary to health enrollment for AA and NHPI individuals](#). Through this work, our members have seen first-hand what consumers need to enroll in health insurance. Today, the passage of the Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act is an important step forward.

AAPCHO looks forward to the Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act being signed into law as quickly as possible. We urge the Senate to act swiftly to pass this bill and send it to the president so that affordable, comprehensive health insurance is available for everyone.”

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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