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National Council of Asian Pacific Americans Statement on White House Immigration Relief Actions

Washington, D.C. - The persistent advocacy of immigrant communities, including the efforts of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) organizations and youth, helped to pave the way for President Barack Obama's decision to take executive action and provide immigration relief in a number of contexts.

The President's Immigration Accountability Executive Action includes various key policy reforms including providing relief from deportation to an estimated 4.9 million undocumented immigrants; replacing the detrimental Secure Communities program; reforming immigration enforcement priorities; and increasing border security. The President's executive action also includes plans to modernize the current visa system that has led to tremendous backlogs, especially in the family immigration process.

"These reforms are a historic step in the right direction," said Mini Timmaraju, national director of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA). "We thank the President for his leadership and celebrate this remarkable progress in the movement for immigration reform. While we commit to working with the White House on the critical next steps of outreach and implementation, it is now up to Congress to pass legislation that can fully address the problems with our immigration system."

Asian American immigrants stand to benefit from the President's plan to provide temporary relief from deportation to an estimated 4.9 million undocumented people. An estimated 1.3 million of the total undocumented population is of Asian descent. Yet, many Asian undocumented immigrants and their families will not be able to obtain relief under the plan. In addition, Asian immigrants who have been waiting for decades to reunite with family members due to the visa backlogs in the family immigration system will not obtain any relief. And many community members may continue to face the threat of detention and deportation without proper oversight and civil rights protections.

NCAPA will work with our member organizations in the coming weeks to analyze the impact of the President's Immigration Accountability Executive Action on AA and NHPI communities, to assist with outreach and implementation, to provide input to the visa modernization taskforce and will continue to work with Members of Congress on comprehensive immigration reform. We pledge to continue our advocacy efforts to lift up our belief that all families matter.

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The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA), founded in 1996, is a coalition of 33 national

Asian Pacific American organizations. Based in Washington D.C., NCAPA serves to represent the interests of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA & NHPI) communities and to provide a national voice on policy issues and priorities.