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U.S. Supreme Court Upholds the Constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act
Ruling Ensures Health Care Coverage for Millions of Americans

WASHINGTON – The Asian American Center for Advancing Justice (Advancing Justice)—Asian American Institute (AAI), Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), Asian Law Caucus (ALC) and Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC)—praises the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision upholding the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). With a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court ruled that the ACA is constitutional, but the federal government’s power to terminate states’ Medicaid funds is limited. Enacted in 2010, the ACA is designed to provide health insurance coverage to 32 million currently uninsured Americans. The constitutionality of the ACA was challenged in a series of cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court’s decision reaffirms our nation’s effort for comprehensive health care reform and to address \$43 billion in uncompensated health care annually.

“We applaud the Supreme Court’s decision,” said Mee Moua, president and executive director of AAJC. “We can now move forward with the hard work of implementing the law and ensuring access to health care for all Americans. The Affordable Care Act will greatly benefit close to 2.5 million Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders across the country who will be eligible for health coverage for the first time by January 1, 2014. In addition, one in 10 Asian Americans and one in eight NHPIs will gain health coverage through the Medicaid expansion alone.”

While some people are unaware of the current benefits under the ACA, thousands of Americans have already benefited from the law. Already more than 97,000 Asian American and Pacific Islanders up to age 26 have been able to be covered through their parent’s health insurance and more than 2.7 million Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) have received free preventive services from their current health plans since the passage of the ACA in March 2010. The Asian American and NHPI communities suffer from health disparities, such as higher uninsured rates and increased rates of chronic conditions, including cancer, hepatitis B, asthma and diabetes. Currently under the ACA, insurance companies are prohibited from discriminating against children with pre-existing conditions like chronic diseases. These protections will be extended to adults in 2014. The ACA provides a foundation for a more equitable health care system that provides affordable, quality health insurance for millions of people.

“We commend the Court for supporting the responsibility of government to address access to health care and to reduce health disparities in the U.S. Today’s decision means that for a state like California, with the largest Asian American and NHPI population, more than 600,000 uninsured Asian Americans and NHPI will gain access to needed health care because they will be insured,” said Doreena Wong, project director of APALC’s

Health Access Project.

AAJC and APALC joined *amicus curiae* briefs in support of the ACA. Over 140 *amicus* briefs were filed at the U.S. Supreme Court, setting an all-time record.

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The Asian American Center for Advancing Justice (www.advancingjustice.org) is comprised of the Asian American Justice Center in Washington, DC(www.advancingequality.org), the Asian American Institute in Chicago (www.aaichicago.org), the Asian Law Caucus (www.asianlawcaucus.org) in San Francisco and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (www.apalc.org) in Los Angeles. The mission of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice is to promote a fair and equitable society for all by working for civil and human rights and empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other underserved communities.