

# COMMISSION ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN AFFAIRS

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## FACT SHEET

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### MEMBERS

Akemi Arakaki

Luisa Blue

Fritz Friedman

Francisco Hsieh

Norman Hui

David Kim

Ann Nguyen

Paul Osaki

Albert Seto

Philip Ting

Diane Ujjiye

Alexis Wong

Charles Woo

### **ABOUT THE COMMISSION**

The Commission on APIA Affairs (CAPIAA) was established by legislation, AB 116 (Nakano). CAPIAA is charged with advising the Governor, the Legislature, state agencies, departments, and commissions on issues relating to the social and economic development, rights and interests of the API communities.

Asian and Pacific Islanders (APIs) are the fastest growing and most diverse ethnic group in California, representing 4 million residents and over 12% of California's population. CAPIAA was created as a citizens' commission to serve as a statewide voice for the interests and concerns of the API communities.

CAPIAA consists of thirteen members appointed by the Governor and the Legislature. CAPIAA does not have any fiscal impact on the State as it does not receive any state funding and is supported entirely by private sources.

### **MISSION**

CAPIAA's mission is to elevate the political, economic, and social issues of APIs by contributing to and strengthening how state government addresses the needs, issues, and concerns of the diverse and complex APIs communities.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Advise the Governor and the Legislature on how to respond most effectively to views, needs, and concerns of the state's APIA communities.
- Assist the state in maintaining effective liaison and outreach with APIA communities through information dissemination about APIA resources to the public, effective outreach with APIA communities concerning public and private programs beneficial to their interest.
- Compile research and examine issues of access and cultural and language sensitivity by state agencies, departments, and commissions.
- Provide assistance to policy makers and state agencies in identifying APIA communities' needs and issues and developing appropriate responses and programs.
- Educate the public about hate crimes against APIA communities.

*For more information, please contact Pam Chueh at 916-319-3686*



Testimonial submitted by the  
Asian & Pacific Islanders' California Action Network (APIsCAN)  
and the  
Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council (A3PCON)

**Oppose Elimination of California Commission on Asian Pacific Islander American Affairs –  
California Performance Review**

*API'sCAN is a catalyst for public policy and community development that promotes health, social, economic, and political equity for the diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities through organizing, collaboration, leadership development and education. API'sCAN is comprised of over fifty (50) community-based organizations statewide.*

*A3PCON is a Los Angeles county- based coalition of service providers and policy advocates. A3PCON coordinates service and policy activities for a membership of over forty (40) community based organizations and is a member of API'sCAN.*

API'sCAN and A3PCON urge you to reject the recommendation of the California Performance Review (CPR) to eliminate the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) Affairs. The termination of the Commission on APIA Affairs offers no fiscal benefit to the State and taxpayers as this commission receives no state funding and is supported entirely by private sources.

The Commission on APIA Affairs was established by legislation (Assembly Bill 116) authored by Assemblymember George Nakano and co-authored by members of the API Legislative Caucus on 2002. APIsCAN co-sponsored the initiative. The Commission on APIA Affairs consists of 13 members appointed by the Governor and the Legislature, and is charged with advising the Governor, the Legislature, state agencies, departments, and commissions on issues relating to the social and economic development, rights and interests of API communities.

The entire process, from the initial conceptual framework, to refining the bill language, to conducting the legislative advocacy towards its passage was community-driven. API'sCAN and A3PCON leadership are committed to supporting the commission in ensuring its mandates are fulfilled.

We would like to share with you some voices from our community:

This is a Korean man we worked with: “I own a small business and can’t afford the health insurance premiums so I’m uninsured. I’ve been coughing blood for several months and having a hard time breathing. I finally went to the emergency and found out that I have lung cancer. Now I’m not sure who will take care of my family.” (he later died)

This is a Vietnamese student: “I’m in the top 1% of my high school but because my family is poor, I have to drop out of school to help them financially. I would have been the first member of my family to go to college.”

A Chinese family: “We cannot afford our apartment so we took in another family to help pay for our rent. We now have 7 people living in a 1-bedroom apartment.”

A Cambodian mother - “I’m so afraid for my children’s safety. I don’t let them out of the house for fear they’ll be hurt by drug dealers or gang members. All they do is watch T.V. and eat fast food cause I can’t be home to cook for them since I work so much. I wish there was a safe place for them to be at after school.”

These voices from the community explain exactly why we need this Commission.

The creation of California’s Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs was monumental. We now have a commission that advises the Governor, legislature and other state agencies regarding the needs, rights and interests of all of the Asian and Pacific Islander American communities in California.

We cannot continue to watch as community members die from diseases because they are uninsured. We cannot continue to watch as families cannot afford housing or food because they work for low wages and have no benefits. We cannot continue to watch as many of our Asian and Pacific Islander American youth cannot afford to go to college even though they work and their parents work. The commission works with our policymakers and state agencies to address these needs.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, California accounts for 36.1% of all APIAs in the U.S. The next closest state is New York with 10.2%. We are the state with the largest population of APIAs and we want to abolish a commission specifically designed to address the needs of such an important community. Washington State, with the fourth largest API population at 4.9%, has a well established APIA Commission that has been in existence since 1974.

The Commission on APIA Affairs seeks to make government more efficient and effective by disseminating information on state programs and services to the community and increasing access between APIs and state government, It is essentially a citizens’ commission, comprised of API community leaders from different vocations, backgrounds, and regions of the state; that can give an impartial assessment of the API community’s needs and therefore hold the government accountable to the state’s 4 million APIs. The Commissioners provide the Governor and the Legislature unfiltered feedback about community needs that might otherwise never reach Sacramento.

The CPR recommends the elimination of the Commission on APIA Affairs and the transfer of the responsibilities of the Commission on APIA Affairs to a newly formed Governor's Office of Community Affairs that will be "directly accountable to the Governor for the success or failure of the programs operated by these separate agencies." The Commission on APIA Affairs does not administer any state programs but serves as an independent advisory body to the Governor, Legislature, and other state entities. While the establishment of a Governor's Office of Community Affairs could increase access for the state's many diverse communities, it would not be able to independently advise the Governor and the Legislature. In addition, the creation of a Governor's Office of Community Affairs would require a significant number of staff to adequately serve the many diverse communities in California, which would ultimately result in additional costs to California.

The establishment of the Commission on APIA Affairs was a historic recognition of the accomplishments and needs of the California's growing API population. We urge you to reject the CPR proposal.

# CALIFORNIA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

CHAIR: ASSEMBLYMEMBER JUDY CHU

MEMBERS: ASSEMBLYMEMBER WILMA CHAN, ASSEMBLYMEMBER CAROL LIU,  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER GEORGE NAKANO, ASSEMBLYMEMBER LELAND YEE,  
BOARD OF EQUALIZATION MEMBER JOHN CHIANG

September 21, 2004

Joanne Kozberg, Co-Chair  
Bill Hauck, Co-Chair  
California Performance Review Commission  
1400 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **RE: Oppose Elimination of California Commission on Asian Pacific Islander American Affairs – California Performance Review**

Dear Commissioners:

The Asian Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus respectfully requests you to reject the recommendation of the California Performance Review (CPR) to abolish the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) Affairs. The elimination of the Commission on APIA Affairs offers no fiscal benefit to the State and taxpayers as this commission receives no state funding and is supported entirely by private sources. The proposal to abolish the Commission on APIA Affairs does not make fiscal sense and decreases the ability of APIs to participate in government.

The Commission on APIA Affairs was established by legislation (Assembly Bill 116) authored by Assemblymember George Nakano and co-authored by members of the API Legislative Caucus. The Commission on APIA Affairs consists of 13 members appointed by the Governor and the Legislature, and is charged with advising the Governor, the Legislature, state agencies, departments, and commissions on issues relating to the social and economic development, rights and interests of API communities.

APIs are the fastest growing major ethnic group in California, representing 4 million residents and over 12% of California's population. While APIs have made recent gains in many segments of society, APIs still face many challenges. The API community's ethnic, social, and economic diversity also results in complex and varied needs within the community ranging from access to health and social service programs to hate crime and civil rights issues. Despite the rapid growth of the API community, APIs continue to struggle to be heard as a single cohesive voice in the public policy arena, particularly in Sacramento. For this reason, the API community fought for the creation of the Commission on APIA Affairs to represent their interests and concerns at the statewide level. Additionally, the establishment of this commission has become a historic moment for APIs.

**California Performance Review Commission**  
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By disseminating information on state programs and services to the community and increasing access between APIs and state government, the Commission on APIA Affairs seeks to make government more efficient and effective. The Commission on APIA Affairs increases accountability and makes government more responsive to Californians by serving as a statewide voice to make the issues and concerns of APIs known to policy makers. As such, the Commission on APIA Affairs helps to hold elected officials and government more accountable to the 4 million API residents of California. Additionally, the function of the Commission on APIA Affairs is to bring together API leaders from different vocations, backgrounds, and regions of the state to give an impartial assessment of the needs of the API community. The Commissioners provide the Governor and the Legislature unfiltered feedback about community needs that might otherwise never reach Sacramento.

Furthermore, we believe that it will not be in the best interest of the State to adopt the CPR recommendation of transferring the responsibilities of the Commission on APIA Affairs to a newly formed Governor's Office of Community Affairs that will be "directly accountable to the Governor for the success or failure of the programs operated by these separate agencies." The Commission on APIA Affairs does not administer any state programs but serves as an independent advisory body to the Governor, Legislature, and other state entities. A Governor's Office of Community Affairs would not be able to independently advise the Governor and the Legislature. In addition, the creation of a Governor's Office of Community Affairs would require a significant number of staff to adequately serve the many diverse communities in California, which would ultimately result in additional costs to California.

The establishment of the Commission on APIA Affairs was a historic recognition of the accomplishments and needs of the California's growing API population. I urge you to reject the CPR proposal and thank you for taking the time to consider this request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this important and valuable commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Chu". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Judy Chu, Ph.D.**  
Chair, Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 24, 2004

Anne Sheehan  
Executive Director  
California Performance Review  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **RE: Oppose Elimination of California Commission on Asian Pacific Islander American Affairs – California Performance Review**

Dear California Performance Review Commission:

As concerned members of the California Congressional Delegation, we strongly urge you to reject the recommendation of the California Performance Review (CPR) to eliminate the Commission on Asian Pacific Islander American Affairs (the Commission).

The Commission was established in 2002 by legislation (Assembly Bill 116) authored by Assemblymember George Nakano, to advise the Governor, the Legislature, state agencies, departments, and commissions on issues relating to the social and economic development, rights and interests of the Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) community.

APIAs are one of the fastest-growing populations in the country. Within California, APIAs represent 4 million residents and over 12% of California's population. APIAs come from nearly 50 countries and ethnic groups, speaking numerous languages, practicing different religions, and having tremendously different needs and characteristics. Despite the rapid growth of the APIA community, the government, particularly in Sacramento, has not well understood or served the APIA community and its needs. As a result, the APIA community and the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus fought hard to create the Commission to better represent their interests and concerns at the statewide level.

The Commission fosters accountability and ensures the government's responsiveness to Californians by serving as a statewide voice to make the issues and concerns of APIAs known to policymakers. The Commission's function is to bring together APIA leaders from different vocations, backgrounds, and regions of the State to give an impartial assessment of the needs of our community. The Commissioners provide the Governor and the State Legislature unfiltered feedback about community needs and priorities.

The CPR recommends the elimination of the Commission and the transfer of its responsibilities to a newly formed Governor's Office of Community Affairs that will be "directly accountable to the Governor for the success or failure of the programs operated by these separate agencies." Currently, the Commission does not administer any state

programs, but serves as an independent advisory body to the Governor, Legislature, and other state entities. While the establishment of a Governor's Office of Community Affairs could increase access for the state's many diverse communities, it would not be able to independently advise the Governor and Legislature.

Additionally, CPR's proposal to eliminate the Commission offers no fiscal benefit to the state. Currently, the Commission receives no state funding and is funded entirely by private sources. The Governor's Office of Community Affairs would require a significant number of staff to adequately serve the many diverse communities in California, which would greatly outweigh the costs of the existing Commission.

We urge you to make issues affecting the APIA communities a priority and reject the CPR proposal. We stand ready to work on improving the lives of millions of Asian Pacific Islander Americans and look forward to your response to this request.

Sincerely,

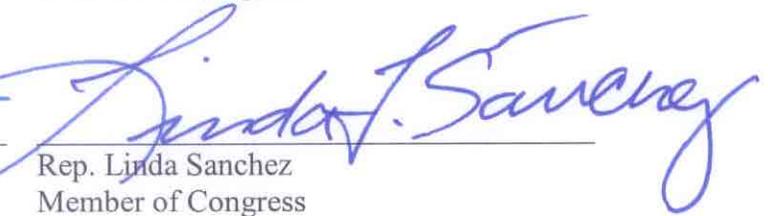
Rep. Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress

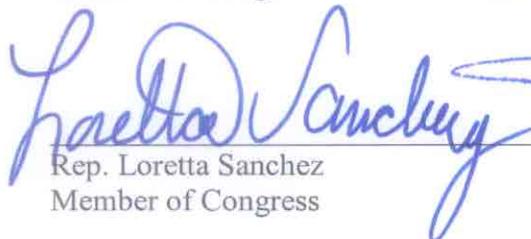
Rep. Tom Lantos  
Member of Congress

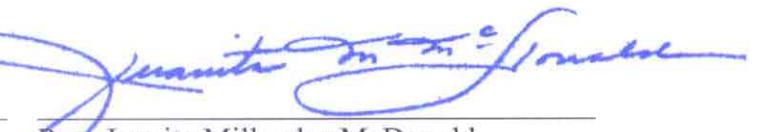
  
Rep. Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress

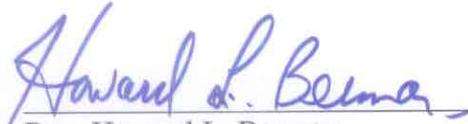
  
Rep. Dennis A. Cardoza  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Joe Baca  
Member of Congress

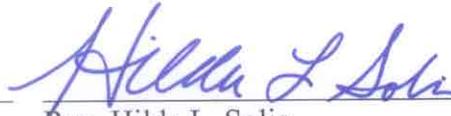
  
Rep. Linda Sanchez  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Loretta Sanchez  
Member of Congress

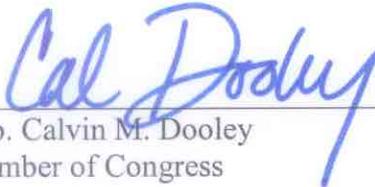
  
Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald  
Member of Congress



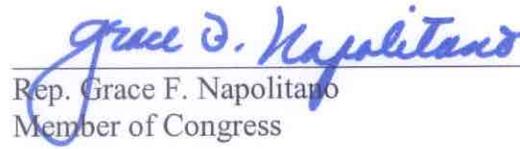
Rep. Howard L. Berman  
Member of Congress



Rep. Hilda L. Solis  
Member of Congress



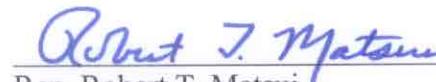
Rep. Calvin M. Dooley  
Member of Congress



Rep. Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



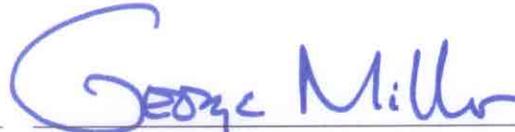
Rep. Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



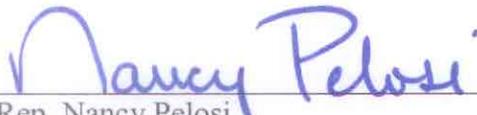
Rep. Robert T. Matsui  
Member of Congress



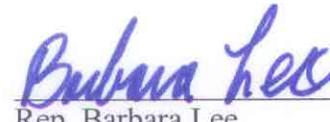
Rep. Lynn C. Woolsey  
Member of Congress



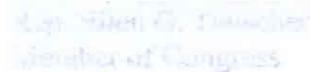
Rep. George Miller  
Member of Congress



Rep. Nancy Pelosi  
Member of Congress



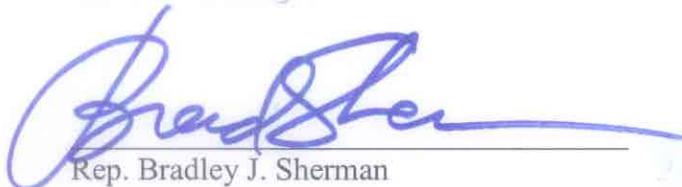
Rep. Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



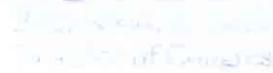
Rep. Mark C. Donohoe  
Member of Congress



Rep. Lois Capps  
Member of Congress



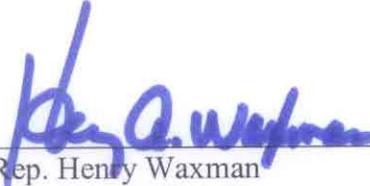
Rep. Bradley J. Sherman  
Member of Congress



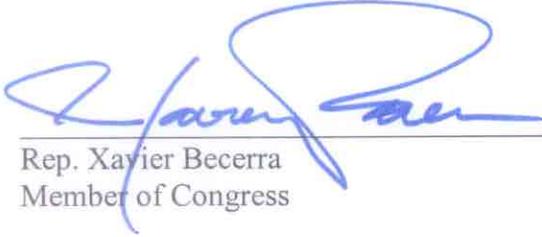
Rep. [Faded Name]  
Member of Congress



Rep. Adam Schiff  
Member of Congress



Rep. Henry Waxman  
Member of Congress



Rep. Xavier Becerra  
Member of Congress



Rep. Diane E. Watson  
Member of Congress



Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



Rep. Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



Rep. Jane Harman  
Member of Congress



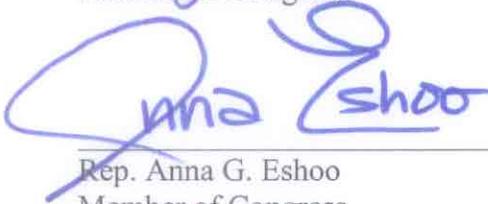
Rep. Bob Filner  
Member of Congress



Rep. Susan A. Davis  
Member of Congress



Rep. Pete Stark  
Member of Congress



Rep. Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress



Rep. Sam Farr  
Member of Congress