

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) applauds President-elect Barack Obama's selection of **Dr. Steven Chu** as his secretary of Energy. Dr. Chu and

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retired Army Gen. Eric Shinseki

, who was named as secretary of Veterans Affairs, are the two Asian Americans selected for cabinet-level positions by President-elect Obama. Rep. Mike Honda, chair of CAPAC, made the following statement upon his announcement:

"I am so pleased that President-elect Obama has named two Asian Americans to his cabinet, Dr. Steven Chu as secretary of Energy, and retired Army Gen. Eric Shinseki as secretary of Veterans Affairs. I'm glad that the new Administration is demonstrating its commitment to not only diversity, but also to science. Dr. Chu, a pioneer in renewable and alternative energy, is a good friend, and fellow Californian. His leadership and expertise will guide us toward our goal of energy independence and sustainability for future generations to come.

"I have had the honor of working with Dr. Chu on numerous occasions, including during his service as an Executive Special Advisor to my Blue Ribbon Task Force on Nanotechnology throughout 2005, and his appearance as a witness at a House Science Committee Energy Subcommittee hearing that I organized in 2006 on the potential of renewable energy technologies. The President-elect continues to bring the best and brightest onto his team. His commitment to a cabinet that reflects America's great diversity is evident. I proudly applaud this appointment."

Dr. Chu is currently the Director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Under his leadership for the past four years, the Laboratory has become a world class institution in alternative and renewable energy research. Dr. Chu's own research has earned many awards and international recognitions, including the 1997 Nobel Prize in Physics for the development of methods to cool and trap atoms with laser light. Dr. Chu's work continues to lead the way toward revolutionary discoveries to energy independence.

Dr. Chu and Gen. Shinseki are the first Asian Americans named to their respective posts. They

will follow the trails blazed by Secretaries Norman Mineta and Elaine Chao. In 2000, Secretary Mineta became the first Asian American to serve in a presidential cabinet.

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The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) is a bicameral and bipartisan caucus of Members of Congress of Asian and Pacific Islander descent and Members who have a strong dedication to promoting the well-being of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Founded in 1994 by then Congressman Norman Mineta, and currently chaired by Congressman Michael Honda, CAPAC has been addressing the needs of the AAPI community in all areas of American life. For more information on CAPAC, please call (202) 225-2631 or visit <http://www.honda.house.gov/capac> .