

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, CAPAC Executive Board Members issued the following statements following the passing of Senator Edward Kennedy:

Rep. Mike Honda, CAPAC Chair: “It is with immense sadness that our country mourns the death of a great leader, Senator Ted Kennedy. A vigilant guardian of civil rights, Senator Kennedy dedicated his life to social justice and ensuring that our nation lives up to its ideals of equal opportunity for all. He was a man of great compassion, representing the voices of the most vulnerable among us. He was an unwavering and skillful leader on issues important to CAPAC and the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, such as economic opportunity, equality for racial minorities, women, and the LGBT community, immigration, education, and healthcare for all. My prayers go to the Kennedy family during this time of hardship. CAPAC, along with our congressional colleagues, will continue to fight to ensure that his proud legacy will live on.”

**Rep. Eni Faleomavaega**, CAPAC Vice Chair: “Senator Kennedy was an iconic member of the U.S. Senate whose presence will be greatly missed. Throughout his 47 years of public service in the Senate, Senator Kennedy demonstrated unyielding support for the poor and did everything he could to assist underserved communities. American Samoa is a beneficiary of the many federal programs that Senator Kennedy championed and, for that, we are forever grateful for his service. On behalf of the people of American Samoa, I extend our condolences to his wife and children, and pray that God will be with them during their time of sorrow.”

Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo, CAPAC Secretary: “The passing of Senator Edward M. Kennedy is a great loss to our entire country. He was a powerful voice for civil rights, disability rights, quality health care for all, and for servicemembers in harm’s way. I remember Senator Kennedy’s visit to Guam some time ago, and his commitment to fighting hard for those who had little or no

voice in Washington. Senator Kennedy led the Subcommittee on Refugees and Escapees in 1975 in trying to ensure an improved response by the U.S. government to the refugee situation in Vietnam and Cambodia. His continued commitment to ensuring that the U.S. upheld its moral obligation to these affected individuals was important and, in part, this role was fulfilled by the people of Guam in accommodating the refugees after the war. Senator Kennedy will be missed by all.”

Rep. Neil Abercrombie, CAPAC Immigration Task Force Chair: “We have lost one of our nation’s greatest progressive leaders in Senator Ted Kennedy, but we have made tremendous gains through his compassion, courage and vision. Senator Kennedy was a life-long advocate for those who needed a voice in the halls of Congress, working tirelessly to advance America’s social and economic progress and to raise the quality of life for all of us. We have lost him at a critical crossroads in the national debate on health care--an issue that he cared about deeply. It will be a fitting tribute that we pass a health care bill to honor his work and legacy.”

Rep. Xavier Becerra, CAPAC Executive Board Member: “If you look at almost any major piece of legislation that helps children, seniors, immigrants, minorities, the disabled, the disadvantaged, you will find Senator Kennedy’s mark on it. His lifetime fight for those who could not speak for themselves inspired me and many in my generation to enter public service and work for change.”

Rep. Anh “Joseph” Cao, CAPAC Executive Board Member: “Senator Kennedy was a historic champion for civil rights and equality for all. His extraordinary political skill and unique ability to work across the aisle is a testament to his effectiveness and a reminder of the power of civil debate.”

Rep. Judy Chu, CAPAC Executive Board Member: “It was with great sadness that I heard of the passing of Sen. Edward Kennedy, the “Lion of the Senate,” this morning. My fellow Congressmembers and I, and indeed our entire nation, have lost today an irreplaceable and tenacious leader who always led by example, always stayed true to his principles, and always fought for what was right and just for all of our citizens. We will especially miss Senator Kennedy’s leadership as we work toward reforming our health care system, an issue that was near to his heart and one of his biggest legislative priorities. We owe it to Sen. Kennedy’s legacy to pass lasting, meaningful healthcare reform this year, and to ensure that his dream of

stable, affordable and quality health coverage for all Americans becomes a reality.”

Rep. Al Green, CAPAC Housing Task Force Chair: “Kennedy was the quintessential public servant, putting his country first for 40 years, serving as a U.S. Senator. He epitomized courage, optimism, and perseverance. Throughout his Senate career, Kennedy championed the rights of the American people. Even as he battled brain cancer, he remained a passionate voice for comprehensive healthcare reform. As Congress works to make his dream a reality this session, let us commemorate his passing by naming the legislation in his honor. This is something a grateful nation can do.”

Rep. Mazie K. Hirono, CAPAC Executive Board Member: “Senator Ted Kennedy will be remembered for his dedication to social justice and for showing us how to keep going in spite of terrible personal tragedies that affected generations of us inspired by the leadership of President John Kennedy and Senator Robert Kennedy. Carrying on his family’s legacy of service, Senator Kennedy’s leadership in advocating for the civil rights for all Americans is especially appreciated in Hawaii. And, we in Congress must work to ensure that his goals in improving education and opportunity for all as well as ensure that all Americans have access to affordable health care are ultimately realized. I send my deepest condolences to all the members of his family and especially to my colleague Congressman Patrick Kennedy, who has lost his beloved father.”

Rep. Doris O. Matsui, CAPAC Health Care Task Force Member: “Senator Ted Kennedy’s passing is heart-breaking news to all of us – to those in public service, and to everyone who believes in the promise of this country. Senator Kennedy has carried the torch for civil rights, national service, education for the American people, and challenged us always – that we can do better. The lion in the Senate, he will always be our champion for quality, affordable health care, proving to us that this is an economic, and a moral obligation.

“Senator Kennedy has shaped so much of the last 50 years in American political life, and we all awoke today understanding that our country has lost a wise and visionary leader. I feel a personal loss, as have many others, who have benefited from his acts of kindness throughout the years. My thoughts and prayers go out to the entire Kennedy family, his wife, Vicki, and their children, Ted Jr., Kara, and my colleague Patrick, as well as to the First Lady of California, Maria Shriver, who have undoubtedly been influenced by this great man we have been so

fortunate to have in our lives.”

Rep. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, CAPAC Executive Board Member: "The people of the Northern Mariana Islands extend their deepest sympathy to the family of Senator Edward M. Kennedy. Senator Kennedy was a leader who saw all Americans as members of one family. And he worked with persistence and passion throughout his life to ensure that each member of the American family was treated with justice and compassion. He will be sorely missed in Congress. But each of us who is blessed to serve there should use the inspiration of Senator Kennedy as our guide in the days and years to come."

Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, CAPAC Civil Rights Task Force Chair: "Today our nation has lost one of its greatest public servants. Throughout his more than four decades in the United States Senate, Senator Kennedy was a champion for the American people. His legislative legacy includes the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Early Head Start Program, the State Children's Health Insurance Program and raising the federal minimum wage for millions of American workers. His absence on Capitol Hill will be especially felt as Congress and President Obama work towards one of his most important life goals – providing affordable access to health care for all Americans. I offer my condolences to Senator Kennedy's wife Vicki, my friend and colleague Congressman Patrick Kennedy and the entire Kennedy family.

Rep. David Wu, CAPAC Education Task Force Chair: "With Senator Kennedy's passing, we lost a true champion in the fight for quality education, health care and civil rights for all. As a member of Congress he embodied the ideal to which we all aspire. As we reflect on Senator Kennedy's passing, I hope others inspired by his legacy take up the mantle of public service in his honor."

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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> .*