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September 18, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

President Trump:

We write to express our deep disappointment in your decision to repeal the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program earlier this month. As Congress works toward a legislative solution to protect Dreamers, we urge you to join us in fighting for clean legislation, without policy riders to pay for a border wall or to reduce legal immigration. In addition, we stand with communities across the country to demand continued protections for those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are the fastest growing demographic in the country. Between 2000 and 2015, the U.S. AAPI population grew 72 percent from 11.9 to 20.4 million.¹ Nearly 70 percent of Asian Americans are immigrants, and an estimated 1.5 million AAPIs are undocumented.² According to the Pew Research Center, AAPIs are projected to become the largest immigration group in the country by 2055.³ As such, we have a deep interest in U.S. immigration policy. Yet we are often forgotten.

An estimated 169,000 individuals eligible for DACA are AAPI, but only about 18,000 of those eligible have applied.⁴ The rates of application among AAPI immigrants are astonishingly low. Our community members face unique challenges to pursue DACA, including stigma related to their legal status, lack of linguistically-appropriate services, and isolation from the broader immigrant community. Many undocumented AAPIs are reluctant to come forward due to the cultural stigma of being undocumented in AAPI communities. Even if young undocumented AAPIs are comfortable stepping forward, they may decline to do so due to fear of endangering their loved ones and the broader shame their families may feel.

In addition, serving the diverse AAPI community is especially challenging for service providers because our communities speak more than 100 different

¹ Pew Research Center, *Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change Through 2065* (Sep. 28, 2015) available at: <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065>.

² Sanam Malik, *More Work is Needed to Increase DACA Applications from Asian American and Pacific Islander Immigrants*, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS (Jun. 2016) available at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2016/06/22/140146/more-work-is-needed-to-increase-daca-applications-from-asian-american-and-pacific-islander-immigrants>.

³ Pew Research Center, 2015.

⁴ Sanam Malik, 2016.

languages and comprise over 45 distinct ethnicities. Moreover, AAPIs have the highest rate of limited English proficiency in the nation with over one third of Asian Americans being limited English proficient. Many households are considered “linguistically isolated,” such that no one in their household older than age 14 speaks English “very well.”⁵ These unique factors make it incredibly difficult for our communities to even come forward and tell their stories, which in turns impacts our representation in the national immigration discussion as well as the resources dedicated to serving our communities.

Finally, we urge you to stand firm in maintaining current TPS designations. As we fight for our own communities, we recognize that, in addition to our Nepalese brothers and sisters, there are over 300,000 men, women, and children from communities across the country for whom TPS is a lifeline.⁶ As you consider how to save Dreamers—a move in line with America’s heart and courage—we urge you to also protect those with TPS.

We strongly urge you to reverse your decision to repeal DACA and to consider the unique impact of immigration policy on Asian American and Pacific Islanders as legislative efforts to save Dreamers move forward.

Sincerely,



JUDY CHU
Member of Congress
CAPAC Chair



PRAMILA JAYAPAL
Member of Congress
CAPAC Immigration Taskforce Chair

cc: Paul Ryan, Speaker of the House

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Carla N. Argueta, *Temporary Protected Status: Current Immigration Policy and Issues*, CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE (Jan. 17, 2017) available at: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesecc/RS20844.pdf>.