

November 12, 2009

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Donna Christensen
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2009

The Honorable Sam Brownback
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank LoBiondo
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Executive Committee

Dear Members of Congress:

Fatima Angeles, MPH
Chairperson

On behalf of the thousands of stakeholders in our communities who have been impacted by lung cancer, the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF) writes to thank you for your leadership in sponsoring S. 332 and H.R. 2112, the Lung Cancer Mortality Reduction Act of 2009.

Dexter Louie, MD, JD, MPA
Vice Chairperson and Treasurer

Ho Luong Tran, MD, MPH
President/Chief Executive Officer

The success of this legislation is especially critical for the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) communities as no other cancer takes more lives in the AA and NHPI communities than lung cancer. According to a study published in the April 29, 2009 edition of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, the overall incidence of cancer in the United States is expected to increase by 45% over the next 20 years. However, among Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders the projected increase is 132% for all cancers and 156% for lung cancer specifically. A 2005 cancer study reported that lung cancer is the predominant cancer affecting AAs and NHPIs, and is the number one cause of cancer death for all AA & NHPI ethnic groups, except Asian Indian women.

Janice Louie, RD, BSPH, MA
Secretary

Rea Pañares, MHS
Member-at-large

Wilson Wang, MD, MPA, MPH
Member-at-large

APIAHF especially commends you for introducing this legislation on the heels of historic FDA regulation of tobacco products. Organizations like ours, who have worked tirelessly for decades protecting our communities from the perils of tobacco use, know that FDA regulation of tobacco products is the ultimate lifesaver. However, we cannot forget those members of our communities who were not protected by FDA regulation and have been impacted by tobacco use, including those who have quit smoking. Over 50% of those being diagnosed with lung cancer today are former smokers, many of whom quit decades ago. Moreover, 10% to 15% of lung cancer patients have never smoked, making non-smoking lung cancer the sixth biggest cancer killer among all populations in the U.S.

Vincent Hau, MD, PhD

Bill Imada

Senator Mee Moua

Debra Nakatomi

Joyce O'Brien, MPH

Sela Panapasa, PhD

Victor Kaiwi Pang

Niyanta Spelman

APIAHF recognizes that historic health care reform legislation is the priority for Congress. Your legislation does not detract from these efforts. Instead, it shines a spotlight on a disease that has been relegated to the shadows for too long. In 2001, a Progress Review Group Report to the National Cancer Institutes described the low level of funding for lung cancer research as "*far out of proportion to its massive public health impact.*" The Lung Cancer Mortality Reduction Act is the first step in correcting this imbalance, by declaring lung cancer a national public health priority and calling upon over a dozen federal agencies to come together to develop a comprehensive plan for reducing lung cancer mortality through increased research.

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By calling for a coordinated federal response to this public health epidemic, your legislation takes lung cancer out of the shadows and gives hope to those impacted by this long overlooked disease. Thank you for your efforts and reminding us that no one deserves to die from lung cancer. No one.

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Sincerely,



Roxanna Bautista, MPH, CHES
Chronic Diseases Program Manager
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)