



CALIFORNIA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

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California Asian & Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus Statement on Governor 2016 Budget Release

Sacramento, CA – On behalf of the Asian & Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus, Assemblymember Das Williams (D – Carpinteria) has released the following statement on Governor Jerry Brown’s Budget Proposal for 2016-17:

“We applaud Governor Brown’s commitment in addressing climate change by investing in SB 350. His actions will have a positive impact in the quality of life for our state, nation, and world. We only have to look at how climate change exacerbates weather phenomenon, such as Typhoon Haiyan, to see how more needs to be done to stabilize the climate in areas such as the Pacific Rim, where many of our Asian & Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities have family ties.

The API Legislative Caucus believes it is urgent to see more investment in our higher education segments, particularly to increase enrollment for in-state students, and a plan for restoration of Medi-Cal funding. The issues of education, health, and housing are major concerns for California’s Asian & Pacific Islander American community, and our Caucus will continue to actively engage Governor Brown and the leadership of the California State Legislature on policies that would significantly address the many needs of this diverse and growing community.”

The API Legislative Caucus will continue to focus on the following policy issues for the 2015-2016 Legislative Session:

- **Higher Education Funding** – The API Legislative Caucus supports increased funding to both the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) to offset increases to student fees, increase California student enrollment and diversity, and protect the quality of academic education in the CSU and UC systems.
- **Acupuncture** - The API Legislative Caucus is advocating for the restoration of certain optional Medi-Cal benefits that were eliminated in 2009, specifically acupuncture. In many cases, APIA community members receive care for health issues using alternative methods. Restoring acupuncture as an optional benefit will ensure that our APIA community members can access care when faced with medical needs.
- **Housing** - Many APIA families have been negatively affected by the housing crisis, particularly in the bay area where many of our communities are concentrated. The API Legislative Caucus plans on exploring some avenues to provide relief for all communities to ensure that families can access and retain a home for years to come.
- **Immigration Programs** – Last year, the API Legislative Caucus partnered with the Latino Legislative Caucus in securing \$15 million for immigration services funding under the One California proposal. We will continue to support programs serving our immigrant populations in California.
- **Language access** - 1.7 million Asian Americans statewide are limited English proficient (LEP), an 11% increase since 2000. Language barriers could prevent APIA community members from accessing state services, from finding employment, and even from voting so we will continue to support efforts to support our LEP community members.
- **Disaggregated Data** – Assemblymember Rob Bonta will be reintroducing a version of AB 176 relative to disaggregated data to enable the state and public to identify trends that are typically unseen through aggregate data, and ensure that the state is adequately meeting needs of its APIA residents.

The API Legislative Caucus was established in 2001 with the mission of representing and advocating for the interests of the diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities throughout California. Additionally, the Caucus seeks to increase Asian Pacific Islander participation and representation in all levels of government. Assemblymembers Das Williams, Phil Ting, and Rob Bonta serve as the API Legislative Caucus Chair, Vice-Chair, and Parliamentarian, respectively. Assemblymember David Chiu serves as Chair of the API Legislative Caucus Policy Subcommittee.

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