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Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus 2017 Year in Review

Policy:

The API Legislative Caucus established 2017 Budget and Policy Priorities to address issues important to the Asian and Pacific Islander community. The final budget approved by the Governor incorporated all Caucus priorities with the exception of funding for housing. Caucus member and Chair of the Assembly Committee on Housing and Community Development, Assemblymember David Chiu, led the development of a package of legislation to address the housing crisis. The Caucus unanimously supported the housing bond and the creation of a permanent funding source to build more affordable housing.

All four of the API Legislative Caucus priority bills that were sent to the Governor were signed into law. These measures protected immigrant rights in their homes, workplaces and schools and ensures that our students learn about our nation's immigrant history.

Finally, the Caucus led a press conference of the six legislative caucuses to denounce the decision to eliminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. The Caucus continues to defend our immigrant communities against racist and discriminatory policies.

Briefings and Hearings:

The Caucus worked with the Senate Select Committee on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs and community partners on briefings and hearings to inform the Capitol community about issues important to the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. Briefing and hearing topics included: Public Charge, Status of Asian American Studies in California Public Higher Education and State of Asian American and Pacific Islander Youth.

API Heritage Month Celebration:

In May, the API Legislative Caucus celebrated the talents, contributions and rich history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Ten outstanding community leaders were recognized for excellence in their industries in the Assembly Chambers during a floor ceremony.

Community Engagement:

Actively engaging Asian American and Pacific Islander communities across California is important to the Caucus. The Caucus kicked off a series of Listening Sessions to listen to the challenges our diverse communities are confronting in different regions of our state. Six sessions have been completed starting in Southern California in Orange County, Monterey Park, Downtown Los Angeles and San Diego then moved to the Bay Area with sessions in San Jose and San Francisco. Fresno was our final stop.

Roundtable Discussions:

Over the year, the Caucus hosted roundtable discussions with Asian American leaders to discuss how California State Legislators can focus public attention on challenges to Asian Americans in certain industries and work on meaningful solutions. Industry discussions have included technology, health, environment, labor, business, nonprofits and entertainment.

Personnel:

As the API Legislative Caucus continues to grow, the caucus successfully advocated for a second consultant to support their goals. Jenny Bach was hired in January with a focus on increasing community engagement. In August, Cat Nou joined the team as the Chief Consultant.