HND News Flash

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Senate Finance Committee Approves Health BillOn October 12 the Senate Finance Committee approved, 14-9, a draft health care reform bill. Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME) was the only Republican who voted in favor of the measure. Now it is up to Senate leaders to craft a bill that marries the Finance and Health, Education, Labor and Pensions bills together. According to Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT), one of the main Senate negotiators, there are some major issues still to be resolved including whether to include a public option; how to pay for the package; how to ensure affordability; and what level of employer responsibility to demand. Advocates hope they will develop a final bill that best protects low-income and vulnerable people.

Unemployment Insurance Extension Awaits Senate Approval

On September 22, the House passed the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009 (H.R. 3548). The bill provides an additional 13 weeks of benefits to those who have lost their jobs, but only if they live in states with unemployment rates of at least 8.5 percent. The bill passed overwhelmingly, 331-83.

Senate Passes FY 2010 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill

The U.S. Senate approved H.R. 2996, the Fiscal Year 2010 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill by a vote of 77 to 21. The bill helps communities and public lands by focusing on 5 priority areas: water infrastructure and environmental protection; firefighting and fuels reduction on federal lands; bolstering our public land management agencies; protecting public lands through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and helping the most vulnerable in Indian Country.

Senate Passes Legislation to Fund Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Agencies

The Senate voted to approve the Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Agencies during last week’s session. According to Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Chair of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations Subcommittee, “This bill invests in the building blocks of economic recovery—safe and efficient transportation, affordable and accessible housing, and improved national infrastructure.” The bill also seeks to address the foreclosure crisis and promote sustainability in our housing and transportation systems.

Senators introduce the Graduation Promise Act of 2009

Low-performing high schools would be eligible for $2.5 billion in federal funds under new legislation introduced on September 23 by U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM). The bill, the Graduation Promise Act (GPA), or S. 1698, would provide money to districts and states to help them implement effective, research-based reforms tailored to the specific needs of high schools. Eight other senators have also signed on as original co-sponsors of this bill.

Senate debate over the Medicare Physician Fairness Act of 2009

The Senate will begin debate on S. 1776, a bill to permanently amend the Medicare physician payment schedule and eliminate scheduled annual cuts. Congress has in the past always patched cuts in payments to doctors with annual legislation, but this bill will eliminate the need to do so. The bill may face difficulties because fiscal conservatives would like congress to offset the $245 billion cost of the bill to with revenue increases or spending cuts elsewhereAnnouncements

A Survey for Better Adult English Language Learning (ELL) Opportunities The Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) is implementing a survey, in cooperation with Daylight Consulting Group to guide the work of strengthening ELL throughout the United States, and with people from all backgrounds - from Mexico, to Cambodia, Poland, Ethiopia, and everywhere in between, as well as people who were born in the U.S. Everyone who works with adult ELL programs (otherwise known as ESL or ESOL) is invited to participate in this survey. This includes teachers, administrators, advocates, volunteers, researchers, supervisors, and everyone else who works to make sure that adults in the U.S. have the opportunity to learn the English language. By completing this survey you are helping support more and better adult English language learning programs, which are bound to become even more important as Congress moves towards Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the immigrant population continues to grow. The deadline for completing the survey is Oct. 31, 2009. Link to the survey: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=NUWp3ULMuQLB_2f39z6S6Tww_3d_3d

New Push for Immigration Reform on the Horizon

Thousands of advocates from across the country converged on the West Capitol Lawn on October 13 for a rally and vigil in support of humane immigration policies. They gathered to meet with Members of Congress and remind legislators of the urgent need to fix our current immigration laws. In August, President Obama admitted that in all likelihood it would not be until early next year when immigration reform would really begin to gain traction. Advocates and immigrant rights leaders continue to urge the Administration and Congress take up the issue as early as possible. Representative Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), an ardent supporter of immigration reform who for the last year has been touring the country documenting how families and citizens have been harmed by our outdated immigration laws, will likely be the first to answer their call. At the rally he announced that he will introduce a bill in the coming weeks and outlined his principles for comprehensive and humane immigration reform, which include: A pathway to legalization for undocumented workers, farm workers and students; Border and interior enforcement that is professional, effective and humane; Worker protections; Verification systems; Family unity; and Immigrant integration.

President Obama signs Executive Order on AAPIsOn October 14th, President Barack Obama signed an Executive Order reestablishing the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, an executive order established a decade ago by President Bill Clinton to improve the quality of life in underserved AAPI communities through increased participation in federal programs. The White House Initiative will be housed under the Department of Education to be co-chaired by Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan and Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke, and by a yet-to-be-named Executive Director. The Initiative will consist of a federal inter-agency working group comprised of staff from various agencies, which will be overseen by a Commission comprised of AAPI leaders and experts in various sectors. The Commission's role is to advise the President, through the Secretaries of Education and Commerce, on executive branch efforts to improve the quality of life of AAPIs through the compilation of research and data related to AAPI populations

and sub-populations; development, monitoring, and coordination of Federal efforts to improve the economic and community development of AAPI businesses; implement strategies to increase public and private-sector collaboration; and foster community involvement in improving the health, education, environment, and well-being of AAPIs.

HND Cancels 2010 Hmong National ConferenceHmong National Development, Inc. (HND) will postpone conference planning activities for the upcoming 15th annual Hmong National Conference (HNC) scheduled to take place in Washington, D.C. during spring 2010. With a unanimous vote by the HND board of directors, comprised of community members from across the United States, this year’s 15th annual HNC will be deferred due to limited resources and staff capacity to successfully coordinate a commendable conference for participants. Instead, the HND board of directors will use this opportunity to meet with community members, local/national partners, and other stakeholders in their respective areas to identify new conference goals and activities. A Briefing on reforms to the Family-Based Immigration System of 1965 On October 23rd, there will be a briefing on possible legislative solutions on the current immigration system. Since its creation in 1965, the Family-Based Immigration System has yet to be updated. As a result, thousands of individuals must wait years, even decades, until they are able to reunite with their family members. Asian countries suffer from some of the worst immigration backlogs. These backlogs are due to a system that is in need of reform. This briefing will host speakers from the Asian American Justice Center, Office of Congressman Honda, Friends Committee on National Legislation, and U.S. citizens sharing their personal stories. Job Opportunities

The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) seeks a committed advocate to serve as Policy Director in NAPABA’s D.C. headquarters. The Policy Director works closely with NAPABA’s committees, the NAPABA Board, and NAPABA affiliates to promote diversity in the legal profession and justice, equity, and opportunity for Asian Pacific Americans. This is a unique opportunity for a conscientious professional to develop management skills in a small and busy not-for-profit office. To Apply: Interested candidates should email policy@napaba.org and ed@napaba.org a cover letter, résumé, and three references addressed to: Tina R. Matsuoka,
Executive Director, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, 1612 K St. NW, Suite 1400, Washington, DC 20006.

Funding Opportunities

The Home Depot Foundation: Affordable Housing Built Responsibly Grant Program
The Home Depot Foundation is dedicated to building affordable homes for working families that are healthy to live in and affordable to own. Through the Affordable Housing Built Responsibly Grant Program, the Foundation supports nonprofit organizations throughout the United States and Canada whose missions align with the Foundation's interests in supporting the production and preservation of affordable, efficient, and healthy housing. Preference is given to proposals that result in the production, preservation, or financing of housing units for low- to moderate-income families. The most promising proposals should incorporate a number of "green" building design practices. The 2010 deadlines for online letters of inquiry are January 15 and July 1. Visit the Foundation's website to review the grant criteria and take the eligibility test.

Norman Foundation: Environmental Justice Grants
The Norman Foundation supports efforts throughout the United States that strengthen the ability of communities to determine their own economic, environmental, and social well-being, and that help people control those forces that affect their lives. The Foundation's Environmental Justice grants provide funding to nonprofit organizations that work to prevent the disposal of toxics in communities and to link environmental issues with economic and social justice. Programs that can serve as a model for other organizations and communities are encouraged. In addition, priority is given to organizations with annual budgets of under $1 million. The upcoming deadline for Environmental Justice grants is December 1, 2009. Visit the Foundation's website to review the process for submitting letters of inquiry.

Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries
The goal of the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries is to provide print books to the K-12 school libraries and students that most need them. Grants of up to $6,000 are offered to update, extend, and diversify the book collections of school libraries throughout the United States. Preference is given to elementary, middle, or high schools in which 90% or more of the school population receives free or reduced lunch. Funds are available only for library books and magazine/serial copies and subscriptions; requests for staffing, shelving, furniture, equipment, software, videos, classroom book sets, or exams are not considered. All grants are made to individual schools rather than to school districts, foundations, or other entities. The application deadline is December 31, 2009. Online application information is available on the Foundation's website.

Echoing Green Fellowship Program
Echoing Green invests in outstanding emerging social entrepreneurs to help them launch new organizations that deliver bold, high-impact solutions to society's most difficult problems. Each year, Echoing Green awards 12 to 15 two-year fellowships to entrepreneurs worldwide who are creating innovative social change organizations. Fellowships are provided to individuals (at least 18 years of age) or partnerships (organizations led by two people) with: innovative solutions to significant social problems; strategies to create high-impact, sustainable change in people's lives; and the ability to grow and lead a new organization. Fellows receive seed funding ($60,000 for individuals and $90,000 for partnerships) and technical support to turn their innovative ideas into sustainable social change organizations. The

application deadline is December 2, 2009. Online application information is available on the Echoing Green website.

Bank of the West Charitable Contributions Program
The Bank of the West Charitable Contributions Program supports nonprofit organizations dedicated to improving the quality of life in the communities served by the bank in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Grants are provided in the following categories: Education and Job Training, Community and Economic Development, Health and Human Care, and Civic and Community. Preference is given to projects that focus on low- and moderate-income individuals and communities. Requests are reviewed throughout the year. Application guidelines and forms are available on the bank's website.

Brookdale Foundation Relatives as Parents Program: Statewide Initiative
The Brookdale Foundation focuses on the needs and challenges of America's elderly population. The Brookdale Relatives as Parents Program Statewide Initiative supports public state agencies that can generate new caregiver activities, locally and statewide, for grandparents or other relatives who have taken on the responsibility of surrogate parenting when the biological parents are unable to do so. The initiative will provide $10,000 in funding over a two- Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, and Vermont. The application deadline is January 7, 2010. Visit the Foundation's website to download the guidelines and RFP for the Statewide Initiative.

The Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation
The Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation focuses on strengthening and supporting communities throughout the state of Maine. The Foundation provides grants of $500 to $50,000 for community-based projects that address the underlying causes of social and environmental problems, as well as those that address the consequences. Priority is given to nonprofit organizations that promote literacy, provide community services, or focus on the arts. The next application deadline is December 31, 2009. Funding guidelines and application forms are available on the Foundation's website.

VSA arts: Arts Connect All
The mission of VSA arts is to create a society where people with disabilities learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. VSA arts and MetLife Foundation are offering the Arts Connect All funding opportunity to encourage arts organizations to strengthen partnerships with local public schools by creating or enhancing multi-session, inclusive education programs. Nonprofit organizations, including museums, theaters, and multi-disciplinary arts presenters, in selected major metropolitan areas throughout the country are eligible to apply for grants up to $15,000. (A list of eligible cities is available on the VSA website.) Proposals must focus on programs that have students with and without disabilities learning together and that are ongoing or have multiple sessions. Programs may take place during school hours or after school. The application deadline is December 11, 2009. Visit the VSA arts website to review the application packet information. Federal Deadlines

Department of Energy: FY 2010 Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Program
These programs support efforts toward increasing private sector commercialization of technology developed through research and development, stimulating technological innovation in the private sector, and improving the return on investment from research for economic and social benefits to the nation.

Department of Health and Human Services: Statewide Family Network Grants
This program provides funds to enhance state capacity and infrastructure to be more oriented to the needs of children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances and their families.

Department of Justice: CCDO FY 10 Weed and Seed Communities Competitive Program
This program aims to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, criminal drug-related activity, and gang activity. The following four elements make up the two-pronged Weed and Seed strategy: law enforcement; community policing; prevention, intervention, and treatment; and neighborhood restoration.

Environmental Protection Agency: SmartWay Clean Diesel Finance Program
This program provides funds to create finance programs, such as low cost leases or revolving loan programs, to achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions throughout the United States.Department of Health and Human Services: Substance Use and Abuse among U.S. Military Personnel, Veterans and their Families
This program supports efforts to enhance and accelerate research on the epidemiology, identification, prevention, and treatment of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and abuse and associated mental health problems among active-duty or recently separated (e.g., Iraq and Afghanistan) military troops and their families.

Hmong National Development, Inc. (HND) is a national, 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization. Our mission is to build capacity, develop leadership and empower the Hmong American community. HND works with local and national organizations, public and private entities, and individuals to promote educational opportunities, increase community capacity, and develop resources for the well-being, growth, and full participation of Hmong in society.

The HND News Flash is a bi-weekly electronic newsletter with information regarding policy issues, HND updates, and

current community news. For more updates, visit: www.hndinc.org.

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