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WOMEN OF COLOR UNITED FOR HEALTH REFORM LOOKS TO SENATE TO PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH

(Washington, DC) Coinciding with the Senate's return to its chamber yesterday, Women of Color United for Health Reform published an op-ed in Roll Call's online edition, calling for a firm commitment to the health needs of women of color. The piece, titled "[People Over Politics: Pass Health Care Reform Now](#)," was co-signed by Eleanor Hinton Hoytt, President and CEO of the Black Women's Health Imperative; Miriam Yeung, Executive Director of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum; and Silvia Henriquez, Executive Director of the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health.

The co-authors urged the Senate to keep above the political and partisan chatter that threatens to derail health reform and pass a health reform bill that will greatly advance the health and well-being of all women and communities of color, who make up a growing demographic in the U.S.

"As Senators debate this issue, they must remember that for America to work, we need health care that works for women of color," wrote Hinton Hoytt, Yeung, and Henriquez. **"We need to reform the health care system to ensure that everyone in the U.S. receives equal access to health care coverage throughout their lives. We need health care that is affordable and accessible wherever we live and whatever languages we speak. All women and girls, despite the political tumult we saw in the House, need access to the full array of reproductive health services."**

Since September, Women of Color United for Health Reform has been working to elevate the voices of women of color who, as both health care consumers and decision makers, have much at stake during this pivotal time. The coalition:

- Launched www.womenofcolorunited.net and built a national list of over 800.
- Convened a national conference call with two senior officials from the White House on October 20, 2009. Over 400 people from 31 states and the District of Columbia dialed in to hear from the White House and ask their questions about what health reform will mean for women of color.
- Organized a national call-in day on October 27, 2009. Over 1,000 calls were made from 47 states and the District of Columbia to the national switchboard to urge members of Congress to pass health reform that will be meaningful for women of color.
- Ran internet advertisements on the hometown papers of key Senators, as well as national ads on HuffingtonPost.com and Politico.com.
- Partnered with activists around the country to craft and place op-eds in their local papers.

Women of Color United for Health Reform is a national coalition led by the Black Women's Health Imperative, the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, and the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health. Each of these organizations has been working individually to engage their constituents on health reform: the Black Women's Health Imperative sponsored townhall meetings and organized community health care discussions in 23 states, reaching 460 people; the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum collected stories from its members and organized two meetings with the White House to discuss health care priorities for Asian American and Pacific Islander communities; and the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health provided bilingual toolkits for activists, hosted three *cafecitos* (conference calls) for their constituents, and ran a successful earned media campaign. All three organizations are involved in the December 2 Day of Action for the Stop Stupak campaign.

For more information about Women of Color United for Health Reform and its activities, visit www.womenofcolorunited.net.

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