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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **GROWING ASIAN AMERICAN ELECTORATE SUPPORTIVE OF EFFORTS TO LEGALIZE THE UNDOCUMENTED**

(LOS ANGELES) May 29, 2007: A growing Asian American electorate in Los Angeles County is supportive of efforts to legalize the undocumented and reduce the immigration backlog, according to a report released today by the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC). Based on an analysis of the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters' countywide Voter File and a multilingual exit poll of 2,181 voters conducted during the 2006 General Election in randomly selected precincts, the report is the only to track both Asian American voter registration / turnout and voting behavior.

Among Asian Americans voting in the last year's gubernatorial election, 62% favored legislative attempts to legalize undocumented immigrants and 84% favored attempts to reduce the immigration backlog. Over 58% *opposed* further criminalization of undocumented immigrants. All three positions were consistent among Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Korean American voters surveyed.

"Millions in Asian American communities will be affected by immigration reform," said Stewart Kwoh, President and Executive Director of APALC. "We support a fair and humane approach to reform that respects the contributions of hard working immigrants and protects the families that are so critical to their success."

The report also found that the number of Asian American voters (registered voters who cast ballots) in Los Angeles County grew 28% between the 2002 and 2006 General Elections. In contrast, the number of all voters in Los Angeles County grew only 14% over the same period. Countywide, Asian Americans made up nearly 11% of registered voters and over 9% of those casting ballots in the 2006 General Election. In cities throughout the San Gabriel Valley, Asian Americans made up 45-60% of registered voters and 25-50% of voters.

"The Asian American electorate in Los Angeles County has grown as Asian American communities have grown," said Dan Ichinose, Director of the Demographic Research Project at APALC and author of the report. "Asian Americans are embracing their civic duty and voicing their concerns at the ballot box."

*Asian Americans at the Ballot Box: The 2006 General Election in Los Angeles County* can be found online at [www.demographics.apalc.org](http://www.demographics.apalc.org).

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*Founded in 1983, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for civil rights, providing legal services and education, and building coalitions to positively influence and impact Asian Pacific Americans and to create a more equitable and harmonious society. APALC is affiliated with the Asian American Justice Center (formerly known as NAPALC) in Washington, D.C.*

*Note: Registered voters are those who were registered to vote by October 23, 2006 and eligible to vote in the 2006 General Election. Voters are registered voters who cast ballots in the 2006 General Election. Voter turnout is the percent of registered voters who cast ballots in the 2006 General Election.*

Selected highlights of *Asian Americans at the Ballot Box: The 2006 General Election in Los Angeles County* include:

- Voter Registration and Turnout: Los Angeles County

Overview

- Over 427,000 Asian Americans were registered to vote and nearly 186,000 Asian Americans cast ballots in the 2006 General Election.
- Asian Americans made up 11% of registered voters and 9% of voters countywide.
- Between the 2002 and 2006 General Elections, the number of Asian American voters grew 28%. In contrast, the number of all voters countywide grew only 14% over the same period.

By Ethnic Group

- 43% of Asian Americans registered to vote cast ballots.
- 41% of Asian Indian, 26% of Cambodian, 41% of Chinese, 46% of Filipino, 60% of Japanese, 39% of Korean, and 37% of Vietnamese American registered voters cast ballots.

By Geography

- Asian Americans made up 45% or more of registered voters in six cities countywide: Monterey Park (60%), Rosemead (50%), Cerritos (49%), Rowland Heights (48%), Walnut (48%), and Arcadia (45%).
- 53% of voters in Monterey Park were Asian American.
- Voter registration in 16 cities and voters in 14 cities were one-quarter or more Asian American.

Use of Absentee Ballot

- Among Asian Americans who voted, 37% cast absentee ballots. In contrast, only 26% of all voters cast absentee ballots.
- 21% of Asian Indian, 34% of Cambodian, 38% of Chinese, 29% of Filipino, 42% of Japanese, 44% of Korean, and 40% of Vietnamese Americans who voted cast absentee ballots.

- Attitudes Toward Immigration Reform: Los Angeles County

- 62% of Asian American voters supported efforts to legalize the undocumented, including 56% of Chinese, 67% of Filipino, 72% of Japanese, and 76% of Korean American voters.
- 58% of Asian American voters *opposed* efforts to further criminalize the undocumented, including 53% of Chinese, 55% of Filipino, 61% of Japanese, and 69% of Korean American voters.
- 84% of Asian American voters supported efforts to reduce the immigration backlog, including 84% of Chinese, 86% of Filipino, 86% of Japanese, and 88% of Korean American voters.

- Language Assistance: Los Angeles County

- 31% of Asian American voters were limited English proficient.
- 28% of Chinese, 10% of Filipino, 13% of Japanese, and 76% of Korean American voters countywide were limited English proficient.
- 33% of Chinese, 26% of Filipino, 7% of Japanese, and 69% of Korean American voters used some form of language assistance to vote.

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