



HAPPY BIRTHDAY ACA:

PLANNING A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

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HEALTH THROUGH ACTION improves the health and well being of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander children, adults, and families. Health Through Action seeks to eliminate health disparities among marginalized communities.



THE ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN HEALTH FORUM (APIAHF) influences policy, mobilizes communities, and strengthens programs and organizations to improve the health of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.

PUBLISHED: March 2011

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SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF HEALTH CARE REFORM

MARCH 23, 2011 marks the one-year anniversary of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the largest overhaul of the health care system in decades. The new law will revolutionize our health care system and should be celebrated. Health care reform lowers the cost of health care, increases the number of health care providers, holds health insurance companies accountable, improves the quality of health care and extends health coverage to 32 million people. In this time of economic uncertainty and rising unemployment, health care reform provides much needed security to millions of Americans.

EARLY BENEFITS

In the year since health care reform was signed into law, a number of benefits have already gone into effect. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act provides coverage for young adults under their parent's health plan until age 26, provides no-cost preventive services, eliminates lifetime caps on health coverage, and prohibits insurers from denying coverage to children with pre-existing conditions. This is just the beginning of a series of lasting changes that the law will provide.

IMPACT OF HEALTH CARE REFORM

Importantly, health care reform will provide health coverage to uninsured and underinsured Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AAs and NHPIs) while also enhancing the quality of care our communities receive. An expanded Medicaid program and new Health Insurance Exchanges will expand access to affordable, quality care for more individuals and families. The new health reform law also provides grants to states to develop or partner with consumer assistance and patient navigator programs. These programs use community workers to help patients access health care, and provide health information in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. Health care reform also expands initiatives to increase racial and ethnic diversity in the health professions and offers training grants for providers to strengthen their cultural competency. Federally-funded health programs will also be required to collect data on race, ethnicity, sex, primary language, disability status and geography, which will improve our ability to address disparities facing AAs and NHPIs.

In the year since health care reform became law, there have been five major lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of the law and a majority of the states have either introduced legislation or filed ballot measures to block reforms. The House voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act earlier this year and opponents of health care reform in both chambers of Congress continue to consider measures to weaken the law.

CHALLENGES TO HEALTH CARE

In order for the true promise of health care reform to be fulfilled, we must defend it from efforts to repeal or weaken the law. By celebrating the one-year anniversary of health care reform we are highlighting the progress that has been made in creating a more affordable and just health care system. There is much more to come. Reverting to the status quo or dismantling parts of health care reform would be absolutely detrimental. We cannot afford to let this happen. The time is now to celebrate the promise of health care reform.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HEALTH CARE REFORM

APIAHF has created this toolkit to assist organizations and individuals in planning and hosting a birthday event at your Congressional Member's district office to commemorate the anniversary of the enactment of health care reform. This is by no means a comprehensive guide to planning an event but we hope that it will provide you with some guidance and ideas about how to make your birthday party a success!

This toolkit contains planning tools, media tips, fun event ideas and an evaluation form to document your birthday event. You will also find examples of greeting cards that you can print or photocopy for community members to personalize and sign for your Member of Congress.

To find print-ready versions of the birthday cards, visit our Health Care Reform Resource Center: www.apiahf.org/policy-and-advocacy/health-care-reform-resource-center/community-members.

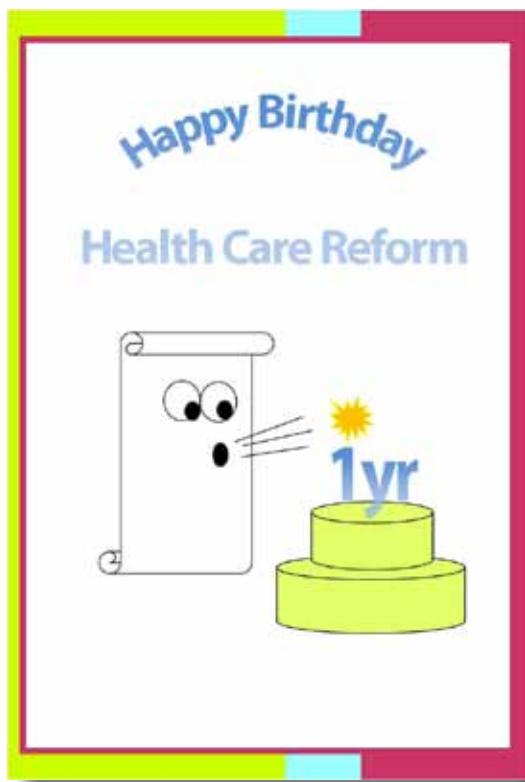
Ask community members and partner organizations to sign the greeting cards (or create their own) and collect them before your scheduled visit. Deliver the cards to the Member of Congress or staff, along with a birthday cake, balloons or other party items and materials to create a festive celebration!

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

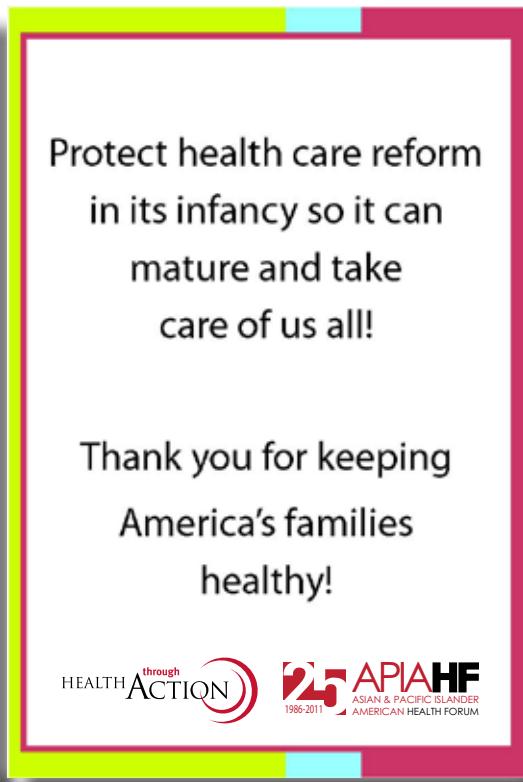
STEP BY STEP CHECKLIST

2 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT	WEEK OF MARCH 7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Hold a planning meeting to discuss logistics.<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and invite individuals who are willing to participate in the event.<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule an appointment with your elected official.<input type="checkbox"/> Inquire if there are special clearances needed to visit the office.<input type="checkbox"/> Ask if it would be okay to invite media to the event.<input type="checkbox"/> Create and gather materials that you intend to use, these could be one pagers, sample birthday cards, letters, etc.<input type="checkbox"/> Plan transportation arrangements for participants.<input type="checkbox"/> Promote your event using fliers, word of mouth and social media.
1 WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT	WEEK OF MARCH 14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a training with your participants that incorporates do's and don'ts.<input type="checkbox"/> Ask participants to create a birthday card.<input type="checkbox"/> Give participants details on how they will get there.<input type="checkbox"/> Follow up and re-confirm meeting with the office you are visiting.<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a media advisory to invite the local media.<input type="checkbox"/> Determine whether and how you will prepare the birthday cake and other small party items.
THREE BUSINESS DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT	MARCH 18
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Send out the media advisory for the event.<input type="checkbox"/> Follow up with the media in the days leading up to the event.
DAY OF EVENT	DAY OF EVENT MARCH 23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Show up early and tell the front desk that you have an appointment.<input type="checkbox"/> Present materials, cake and greeting cards to the Congress Member's staff and introduce your group and your work.<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize that you are located and have members who live in the district.<input type="checkbox"/> Take pictures and videos (with their permission).<input type="checkbox"/> Thank them for their time.
AFTER THE EVENT	MARCH 23 - APRIL 1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Send a thank you note to your Member Congress and any staff that met with you and your group.<input type="checkbox"/> Upload your photos and videos and disseminate them through social media.<input type="checkbox"/> Follow up with reporters who attended the event.<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate your event.<input type="checkbox"/> Follow up with the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum on your event's successes or challenges, and share your pictures.

SAMPLE BIRTHDAY CARDS



Front Cover



Inside Message



Front Cover



Inside Message

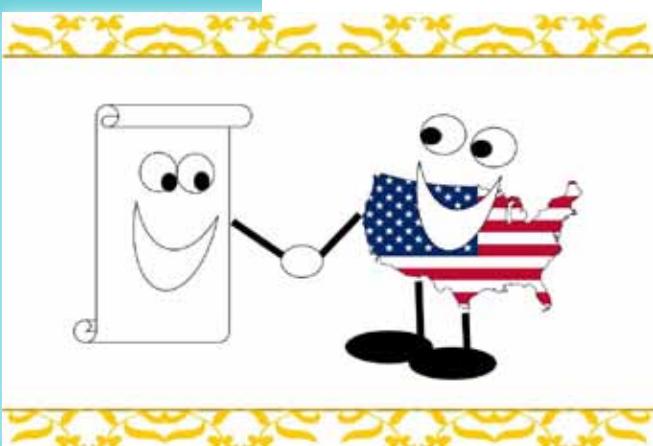


Front Cover

May health care reform
grow to a ripe old age!



Inside Message



Front Cover

*Happy Anniversary
Affordable Care Act and
The United States*

Thank you for making this relationship work!



Inside Message



Front Cover

**...and we thank you for
protecting our health!**



Inside Message

DAY OF ACTION DO'S AND DON'TS

Research the position of your elected official in order to tailor your visit and messaging.

• • •

Leave materials from your organization, highlighting your work.

• • •

Send a thank you note to the staffer you met with.

DO	DON'T
Call to tell the elected official's office that you are coming.	Show up unexpected because this may pose a threat to security.
Familiarize yourself with parking and mass transit options.	Expect to have parking or mass transit available to the office.
Inquire if it is ok to bring cupcakes or cake.	Show up with cupcakes or cake without telling them.
Ask if it would be okay to invite media to the event.	Show up with the media and assume it is okay with the Member of Congress or their staff.
Research the position of your elected official in order to tailor your visit and messaging.	Show up and assume your elected official is supportive of the Affordable Care Act.
Be early.	Show up late. Many times staffers have back to back meetings.
Wear business or business casual attire.	Wear jeans, t-shirts or flip flops.
Stick to 2-3 points.	Talk about many items.
Be respectful of district staff limitations.	Expect staff to devote resources to this event.
Present and convey your message with clarity and respect.	Be boisterous, rowdy or yell your message.
Introduce the work of your organization.	Leave without establishing a relationship with the staff.
Leave materials from your organization, highlighting your work.	Show up to the event without any materials and contact information.
Consider that district staff are very busy and will have time constraints.	Expect to be at the member's office for more than 30 minutes.
Ask to take a picture.	Assume that picture taking is ok.
Clean up all materials that you bring to elected official's office.	Expect staff to clean up the mess.
Send a thank you note to the staffer you met with.	Forget to do necessary follow-up after the visit.

A NOTE ON LOBBYING AS A 501(C)3

For 501(c) 3 organizations, federal rules do allow for lobbying activities. Depending on your organization's status, there is a set amount of time that you can lobby under federal law. In addition, many states have their own laws regulating lobbying activities.

There are two types of lobbying: direct and grassroots.

- Direct lobbying is communicating your views with a legislator on a piece of legislation.
- Grassroots lobbying is communicating with the general public to express a view on a piece of legislation and calling them to action.

Working with volunteers allows you to maximize opportunities under the law. However, the use of organizational resources (such as facilities and materials) can also be counted toward your allocated lobbying limits. It is very important that you track and keep accurate records of the expenses and time spent on lobbying.

For purposes of activities on March 23, you should be careful to explain to your volunteers what they should and should not do under law. Given that the purpose of this event is to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Affordable Care Act, you should not use it as an opportunity to lobby on a particular piece of legislation that is currently pending in Congress. Please use caution in crafting your materials to ensure that your organization follows the boundaries provided under law.

For more information on about the federal lobbying rules we recommend that you visit the Alliance for Justice at www.afj.org/for-nonprofits-foundations/about-advocacy/lobbying.html.

PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

Two to three weeks ahead of time, promote your event with invitations, flyers, or posters displayed throughout your workplace and/or neighborhood. Word of mouth is always key, but don't forget to use social media sites such as Facebook, and Twitter to get the word out.

FACEBOOK

Upload a jpeg of your flier to the event page wall. Tag your friends.

• • •

Leave a comment on the event page wall.

• • •

Send your guests a personal message to invite them to the event.

There are a number of different ways to promote an event on Facebook. We suggest doing them all. The first thing to do is to create an event on Facebook, and share it using a link. If you have created a digital flier, we encourage you to upload it to your organization's Facebook page as a jpeg. Tag your friends and/or upload it directly onto their walls.

How to create an event and share on Facebook:

1. Type "Events" in the search module at the top of your Facebook page



and click on the Events option.

2. Your Events page should pop up. Click on "Create an Event." From here add details of your event. Be sure to include details and logistics of the event. Make sure to check the boxes "Anyone can view and RSVP" and "Show the guest list on the event page."
3. Click on "Select Guests." Invite as many people as you think is appropriate.
4. To attract your guests to this event include a picture or flier related to the event. You can do this by clicking "Add Event Photo."
5. To publish your event, Click on "Create Event."



To ensure that people will participate in the event, you must interact with the guests you have invited. Even if you didn't create the event yourself, consider the tips below.

Leave a comment on the event's wall. And, if one of your guests have commented on the wall, be sure to respond. Doing this will start a dialogue between you and the guests. The more you interact the more engaged. Guests will know more about the event and possibly take the initiative of promoting it as well.

Share your event on your personal Facebook wall. Having your event on your wall will add a personal note to all of your friends. Post the event on groups and fan pages. Go to the event page and click the "share" feature. In the box that pops up, tag the groups, organizations or people [can we tag orgs?] so this event will show up on their walls. This will attract potential new guests who are not in your current guest list.

Send your guests a personal message. You can customize a message to your guests by clicking "Message Guests." Tell them why this event is important to you and ask them to help you promote the event.

Develop a Twitter **timeline** leading up to your event. The best way to outreach and create a buzz about your event is to start early by sharing links to the event, talking about who will be there, and what activities will happen. Share thoughts, comments, and interesting facts about the event. If you can share 2 or 3 comments a day leading up to your event, people will know something big is happening and will want to take part, and will most likely share the buzz by retweeting your updates.

"Make sure you're promoting other people and sharing valuable information. People don't like the "me, me, me" strategy. Nobody really minds someone who shares good content, even if some of it is their own. This is also a great way of increasing your visibility beyond your current network." –<http://eventzi.com/blog/how-to-promote-your-event-with-twitter>

Create a hashtag

A **hashtag** will probably be one of your most powerful tools when promoting your event on twitter. You will need to be strategic when naming your hashtag. You want it to be memorable, be relevant, and short so that it will easily fit into a 140 character twitter message.

Your hashtag will help promote the event on Twitter and generate dialogue. When people click on the hashtag they will access a list of tweets containing the hashtag. This allows people to receive real-time updates regarding the event.



TWITTER

Develop a timeline leading up to your event.

• • •

Create a hashtag that is memorable, relevant and short.

• • •

Reach many more people by tagging other Twitter users in your posts about the event.

Retweet

Retweeting will be one of the easiest ways to help promote the event. If someone has already tweeted about the event, you need to click “retweet.” Messages from organizations or well respected people are most trusted.



projectcharge Project CHARGE
Congrats, Asian Americans for Equality on the release of your new report, "Distinct Places, Shared Opportunity: A...
<http://fb.me/U6N5TJKC>
25 Feb Favorite Retweet Reply

Tagging

If you only have a few followers on twitter, don't fret! You have the potential to reach many more people by **tagging** other Twitter users in your posts. Some of the people, organizations and media that you are connected to have hundreds and even thousands of followers, and you can reach them by tagging them. Be familiar with those people or organizations you want to connect with and tag them in your message using the @ sign and their Twitter username.



@apiahf @apiahf
@VAYLANOLA @projectcharge
@APANONews @CPACS @cacf
@MAAHC @AAHCHOPEClinic
@apcaaz please follow HTA Long Beach
at <http://on.fb.me/hJrSha!>
28 Feb via web Favorite Reply Delete

Mentioned in this Tweet



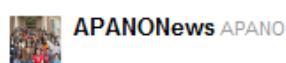
CACF cacf cacf
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families is a pan-Asian children's advocacy organization in NYC.



projectcharge Project CHARGE
As part of Health through Action, Project CHARGE focuses on increasing health access for Asian Americans in NYC.



CPACS CPACS
Creating and delivering culturally competent and comprehensive social and health services



APANONews APANO

ENGAGE THE MEDIA

Policymakers read the opinion section of their local newspapers to understand the opinions of their constituents. Take a shot and write an opinion editorial (op-ed) to your local newspaper and ethnic newspaper. The more you write, the better you will get at it. News articles and op-eds can also give credibility to your arguments when meeting with your legislators, so if you do get one published, use it to your advantage.

The following are some helpful tips based on information from David Jarmul at Duke University. For more of his helpful tips, visit http://news.duke.edu/duke_community/oped.html.

Track the news and jump at opportunities. Timing is essential. Your op-ed should be relevant to current affairs and of interest to your local newspaper's readers. Look for news stories in your local paper about the health care reform debate at the national, state or local level. Submit an op-ed when you think you can add to the debate.

Limit the article to 750 words. Shorter is even better. Unfortunately, newspapers have limited space to offer, and editors generally won't take the time to cut a long article down to size.

Make a single point – well. You cannot solve all of the world's problems in 750 words. Be satisfied with making a single point clearly and persuasively. If you cannot explain your message in a sentence or two, you're trying to cover too much.

Tell readers why they should care. Put yourself in the place of the busy person looking at your article. At the end of every few paragraphs, ask out loud: "So what? Who cares?" Explain why. Appeals to self-interest are usually the most effective.

Offer specific recommendations. An op-ed does not simply describe a situation; it is your opinion about how to improve matters. Don't be satisfied with analysis, in an op-ed article you need to offer recommendations.

Showing is better than discussing. People remember colorful details better than dry facts. When writing an op-ed article, therefore, look for great examples that will bring your argument to life.

Use short sentences and paragraphs. Look at some stories in the New York Times or your local newspaper, and count the number of words per sentence. You'll probably find the sentences to be quite short. You should use the same style, relying mainly on simple declarative sentences. Cut long paragraphs into two or more shorter ones.

SEND AN OPINION EDITORIAL TO YOUR LOCAL AND ETHNIC NEWSPAPERS

Track the news and
jump at
opportunities.



Submit an op-ed
when you think you
can add to the
debate.



Make a single
point - well.



Showing is better
than discussing.

Don't be afraid of the personal voice. Personal stories can make facts and statistics come alive and make your point memorable to your audience. Seek out stories or examples that tie into your audience's feelings. Keep the plot simple and vivid – not every detail is important.

Avoid jargon. If a technical detail is not essential to your argument, don't use it. When in doubt, leave it out. Simple language doesn't mean simple thinking; it means you are being considerate of readers who lack your expertise and are sitting half-asleep at their breakfast table or computer screen.

Use the active voice. Active voice is nearly always better than passive voice. It's easier to read, and it leaves no doubt about who is doing the hoping, recommending or other action.

USE OUR TEMPLATE

HOW TO SUBMIT AN OPINION EDITORIAL

Look on your local newspaper's website to find out where to submit an op-ed. Most newspapers also list their guidelines for choosing which op-eds they will print. Be sure to include your contact information, and say whether you have a photo of yourself available. Most papers now accept articles by e-mail.

We have included a template op-ed in this toolkit for you to use if you want to write an op-ed about the data provisions included in the health care reform law. Make sure to change the op-ed to be in your writing style – to speak in your voice. The italicized text with brackets in the the op-ed are sections that you should change to tell a story about someone in your community who would benefit from better data collection and reporting. Use those sections present information about your community and the work that you do. Talk about how the data provisions will help you in your work or benefit your community.



Template Op-Ed

Health Care Reform Helps Prevent Medical Stereotyping

This week marks the one-year anniversary of the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Unsuccessful in attempts to repeal the health care reform legislation in both chambers of Congress, opponents have vowed to eliminate funding for large portions of the bill, making it impossible to implement. These policy considerations are not just about dollars and cents, but have life-or-death implications for many of our loved ones and family members.

[Consider the experience of Susan Matsuko Shinagawa, a third-generation Japanese American woman. In 1991, she noticed a lump in her breast during her monthly self-exam. Her mammogram was negative, but a sonogram revealed the lump was a solid mass. A surgeon diagnosed Susan with fibrocystic breast disease – “lumpy breasts” – and refused to do a biopsy because she was too young to have breast cancer and because, “Asian women don’t get breast cancer.”]

Months later, Susan sought a second opinion from a doctor who agreed with the initial diagnosis. This time she insisted on a biopsy, which came back positive for cancer. Her experiences with the health care system as she sought treatment strengthened her resolve that other women would not be misdiagnosed because of medical stereotyping.

Susan is now one of our most ardent cancer advocates. With the help of the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF) she formed the Asian & Pacific Islander National Cancer Survivors Network (APINCSN), a coalition that advocates for increased and improved data collection and reporting that gives doctors, researchers, funders and policymakers a clearer picture of cancer’s impact on our communities.

Last year Susan’s work received a major boost when provisions were included in the health care reform law to increase collection and reporting of data on race, ethnicity, and language. The health care reform law also requires the establishment of uniform categories to be used in the collection of race, ethnicity, sex, and primary language for federally-funded health care and health-related activities.

For Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders the data provisions are critical in providing our policy makers, public health experts, local leaders and service providers with the necessary information to set priorities and allocate resources to address particular disparities in our communities.

We trace our heritages to more than 50 countries and to dozens of distinct ethnic groups. We speak more than 100 different languages and represent a multitude of cultures, religions and immigration histories. Despite what may be commonly thought, we exist in large numbers outside of states such as New York and California, in cities such as Phoenix, AZ, Minneapolis, MN, Atlanta, GA and Cleveland, OH.

Of course, the health challenges faced by the Samoan community in Salt Lake City, UT differ vastly from those faced by the Vietnamese community in Houston, TX. For instance, among Asians in California we know that Japanese women have the overall highest breast cancer incidence rates, while Filipinas have the overall poorest breast cancer survival rates. We know this because, by law, the California Cancer Registry collects and reports cancer data by detailed ethnicity. But we don’t know what’s happening with cancer in Asian American women in other states.

Requiring all federally-funded population surveys to collect enough data to allow for reliable reporting of racial and ethnic subgroups will greatly improve the ability to document disparities, especially among smaller populations who are typically excluded from survey findings, or grouped as “Other.”

[We’ve made a lot of progress since 1991. Unfortunately, almost twenty years later we still hear stories about Asian American women being told, “Asian women don’t get breast cancer.”] As we continue to encourage women to take preventive steps and get screenings, our leaders in Congress should do the right thing and make sure that our doctors, researchers, funders and policymakers have the information they need to address breast cancer and other health disparities effectively in our communities.

INVITE THE MEDIA

Note: Before inviting the media to your ACA birthday party event make sure that the Member of Congress and staff are informed and agree that it is okay to invite them. Do not show up with the media without notifying the office.

The Media Advisory

Use a media advisory to notify news outlets of the date, time and place of your event. The media advisory will also give news outlets some background information that may entice them to cover the event. Advisories are also a good way to notify news outlets of a change or additions to an already scheduled event. We have provided a media advisory template to use in developing the media advisory for your event.

A media advisory should be sent out several days in advance of your event and should always be followed up by a phone call. Make sure to send your media advisory to the Associated Press Daybook for inclusion in the listing. News outlets use this in planning what they will cover. Visit www.ap.org/pages/contact/contact.html and use the AP Bureaus drop down menu on the right hand side for contact information for your state. Call your local Associated Press Bureau and ask them how you can have your event listed on the AP Daybook.

Sending Out the Advisory

It's time to compile your media list. Do some research and compile a press list of news outlets and key reporters. There are many databases that track contact information for journalists. If those are beyond your budget, use the internet and make some phone calls.

For basic media outreach for an event, you want to make sure you invite the following:

- Major Network Television News (look for the NBC, CBS, ABC and FOX news affiliates in your city)
- Major Network Radio News (again, look for the network news affiliates)
- Major Newspapers
- Ethnic Language Televisions Stations
- Ethnic Language Radio
- Ethnic Language Newspapers
- Neighborhood Newspapers
- Online News Outlets and Bloggers

Television: Find contact information for the news desk or assignment editors. The media advisory should also be sent to a health care reporter and perhaps the reporter who covers politics.

Newspapers: Find contact information for the metro desk. The media advisory should also be sent to a health care reporter and perhaps the reporter who covers politics. Also find contact information for the photography, picture or photo editor (titles differ throughout outlets, so use your best judgment).

Radio: Find contact information for the news director.

For Immediate Release
March 21, 2011

Contact: [Your Name]
[Phone Number]

[INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION] TO DELIVER BIRTHDAY CAKE TO [INSERT POLICYMAKER'S NAME] TO CELEBRATE ONE YEAR OF HEALTH CARE REFORM

Washington, DC – As part of a national celebration of the one-year anniversary of passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, [insert your organizations name here] and members of other [insert your city or region here] health organizations will deliver a birthday cake to [insert policymaker name here – make sure to use the proper title] and hold a birthday party to celebrate the largest overhaul of the health care system in decades.

In the year since health care reform was signed into law on March 23, 2010, a number of benefits have already gone into effect. Health care reform provides coverage for young adults to stay on their parent's health plan until age 26, provides no-cost preventive services, eliminates lifetime caps on health coverage, and prohibits insurers from denying coverage to children with pre-existing conditions.

HEALTH CARE REFORM BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
MARCH 23, 2011
[INSERT TIME]
[INSERT ADDRESS INFORMATION]

INTERVIEW AND PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES:

[Here you would provide a list of individuals that would spark media interest or describe events that would provide compelling visuals for a television story or for a photographer. This space can also be used to provide a timing breakdown of the event. Because news crews have so much to cover, they may show up just for one quick portion of the event.]

- [insert your organizations name here] presenting a birthday cake for health care reform to [insert policymaker name here – make sure to use the proper title].
- [insert number] community health care advocates celebrating the one-year anniversary of health care reform.

[Insert boilerplate information about your organization here]

###

[Insert your organization's address and contact information in the footer of the document]

CONFIRM THE INVITATION

Call the assignment editor or planning editor. Be vigilant but courteous.

• • •

Follow up with the health care and the politics reporter.

• • •

Make sure you contact the photo editor.

The News Desk, Assignment Editors and the Metro Desk

The key to getting your event covered by local news outlets is following up with the news desk, the metro desk and assignment editors. After you send out your media advisory (a few days before the event), call the news desks at your local television news stations to make sure they received it. Ask them if they are planning to cover it and give them some information that will entice them to cover it.

Assignment editors (the person covering the metro desk or the news desk may have a different title, but the function is very similar) are extremely busy, so don't get discouraged if they are rushed or seem rude. They aren't trying to be mean. They are simply trying to figure out what the outlet is going to cover that day and may have hundreds or even thousands of requests to choose from. Some outlets have planning editors, who organize potential events a few days ahead of time. Ask the assignment editor if they have a planning editor you can speak with because your event is in a few days.

As the day approaches, keep calling to follow up with the assignment editor. You may talk to different assignment editors during different times of the day. They will tell you when to call back and when a decision will be made. Take note and call back at the time they mention. Be vigilant, but remember to be courteous.

Reporters

You should definitely follow up with reporters who cover the issue that is relevant to your event. Send them the advisory and follow up with emails and phone calls. Remember that they too are very busy and get a lot of requests to cover events. When you speak to them, make appeals that help the reporter understand why your event will be providing information that is relevant and important to their readership.

Photo Editors

Follow up with the photography editor and describe the types of images a photographer will be able to capture at the event. Make sure that your event will have opportunities to take compelling pictures that tell a story.

RECORD THE EVENT

Make sure you that you have someone to document your event. Even if your event is covered by a photographer from a news outlet, make sure you have plenty of photographs to use on your website and disseminate through social media. Some neighborhood and ethnic language newspapers don't have the budget for a staff photographer and will sometimes use your photos if they are printing a story. Before sending unsolicited photos to news outlets, contact them and inquire if they would like to use photos that you have available.

Content

Good photography creates a sense of identification with the viewer and tells a story without using words. As you think about taking photographs during the event, think about what images will tell the story in a compelling way. Try to take photographs that incorporate your organization's logo or otherwise identify your organization or community.

During your ACA birthday event, make sure you get the following photos.

- Photos of birthday event attendees in action.
- Photos of the birthday cake being presented to your Member of Congress or staff.
- Photos of the Member of Congress, staff and birthday event participants.

Here are some other tips on taking photos from Adam Stoltman, a respected photojournalist and owner of E2productions. More information on Adam's work can be found at www.E2productions.com.

Composition and Balance

A good image has balance. The photographic **principle of the rule of thirds** by which the frame is considered in horizontal and vertical sections of three as in the grid below, is a basic tenet of photographic composition. Points of interest are not placed in the center of the frame necessarily, but rather at the intersection of these lines or within one of the "thirds." This gives the overall composition a feeling of balance and generally makes it more pleasing to the eye. Study pictures in magazines and newspapers or the framing of shots in your favorite movies, and you will see this principle applied again and again.

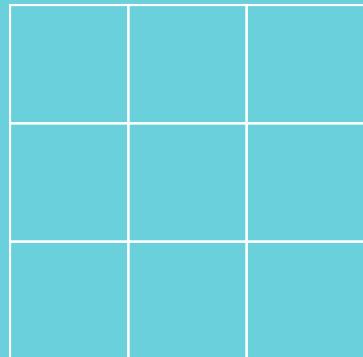
Quality of Light

One of the greatest influencers of mood and feel of a picture is the quality of light. When photographing outdoors, early morning and late afternoon produce the most dramatic light with warm tones and long shadows. Photographs taken in the middle of the day will tend to have harsh and unflattering shadows. Light can be hard or soft, as in a bright overcast day which produces even tones and exposure values. When working with artificial lights a variety of effects are possible. Indoor lighting often has a gritty or documentary feel to it which can be appropriate for certain kinds of situations.

Blogs and video sharing sites such as YouTube give individuals the space

TAKE PICTURES

Note: The general rule of thumb is that for purely editorial uses, a photograph taken in a public place can be published by a news organization or publication without the consent of, or additional permission required from the subject.



RULE OF THIRDS DIAGRAM

This box represents the principle of the rule of thirds. Instead of framing your photo subject in the middle, mentally divide the screen of your camera into nine boxes. Place the subject of your photo in one of the intersections of these lines. It will ensure that you have a compelling background for your photo.

RECORD A VIDEO

to compile their thoughts and opinions, distribute their messages, and immediately interact with their readers and viewers. The rapidly growing network has no filters and generates fierce followings that can propel stories to the front of public consciousness in an instant. Make short videos during the event to upload to YouTube and promote them on your website or through social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Record the Presentation of the Birthday Cake

Before the event, inform the Congress Member's staff that you would like to record video of the birthday cake presentation. Think about issues of background noise and make sure you can capture remarks by the person presenting the cake and the Member Congress or Staff.

Interview Your Member of Congress

Before the event, speak with the Congress Member's press secretary and request a short interview with the Member. If the Member agrees, prepare two or three specific questions to ask. Ask the press secretary or other staff what they would like to use as a background and be accommodating to the Member. Remember that your Member of Congress has a busy schedule, and make the interview as short and as quick as possible.

Interview Community Members

Interview the people attending the ACA birthday event about why they are participating and what health care reform means to them. Remember to work with the person being interviewed to make the story short, clear and concise.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Prepare

What would you watch? Think about what would be interesting to you, or what would draw others to your posted videos.

What are your objectives? Think about what you want to capture before you film. What does the shot look like? Will you need translation? Who is the best person to talk about the video's topic?

Keep It Short

Powerful videos are often under 2 minutes long. The effort you put into keeping it short will go a long way in helping you focus your message.

Keep It Simple. Try to focus on one main topic (ie. an event, one person's story, a lesson, a testimonial). It's easier to get excited about a video that is focused.

Be genuine. Viewers want to connect with the work that your organization is doing. Focus on content that is compelling rather than what's "cool".

Keep It Fluid. Have a Beginning, a middle, and an end. Catch the audience at the beginning and explain what is happening, build emotion in the middle, and come to some sort of resolution at the end – keep it moving.

Don't forget the importance of audio. Audio adds emotion and excitement to the piece and can offer valuable contextual information. Simple, poignant narration or a great music track can drastically improve your piece.

Keep It Interesting.

Capture varied shots:

Wide shot - establishes the scene

Medium shot - gives more intimacy, focuses on one subject

Close-up - for emotion and direct connection to what is being said or done

Extreme close-up - very intimate, emotional effect.

Keep it Steady

When handheld shooting, make sure you keep your hand steady and avoid jerky movements. When panning, do so very slowly to retain detail.

Use the digital zoom sparingly. When possible, move physically closer to the subject.

Stay focused on your subject the whole time they are speaking so you don't miss any of the action.

If conducting an interview, always use a tripod if one is available. Use a flat surface that allows you to easily move the tripod and camera. Set up close to the subject and offset your subject to one side or the other to keep the frame visually interesting.

Sound

Remember that the microphone is on the camcorder so the closer the subject is to the camcorder, the better the sound will be. Don't cover the microphone with your finger!

Be aware that if you shoot in a place with a lot of background noise it is likely that your subject's voice will be drowned out, so pay attention to your surroundings.

Lighting and Composition

Flip Video Camcorders do well in low-light situations but you will always get the best footage when you have good lighting.

Sunlight is good, but be sure to keep it at the shooter's back. This will help you avoid backlight situations which leave your subject blacked out.

If using artificial light, try to get more than one light source to fill the subject.

Pay Attention to the Background

Make sure that the background behind the person you are interviewing adds to your story.

Remember to brand your organization – get your logo in the shot, or somehow visually remind people what organization is being represented.

Make sure that the traffic (people, etc.) behind the subject adds to the story. If you are in an office interviewing someone, make sure no one walks through your shot. If you are at cultural fair or something like that, try to show how many people are there, while making sure that the sound will come out well.

SHOOTING TIPS

Be aware of background noise.

• • •

Make sure the sun is behind the camera and the interview subject is visible.

• • •

The scene behind your interview subject should add to your story.

LEARN MORE

Watch lots of videos and see which ones you like and then model yours after theirs. Here are a few resources to learn more about video production:

The folks at <http://www.freelog.org> have put together an excellent piece about how to create a video blog, from start to finish.

Current TV has put together <http://current.com/participate/resources.htm> for training. There is a lot of useful stuff in there, so dig around.

Blip.tv encourages everyday folks to start making their own episodes, and this is what they have put out for support <http://blip.tv/learning>.

Witness also provides resources for video advocacy.

http://www.witness.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=41&Itemid=214

GET ACTIVE NOW: YEAR ROUND ACTIVITIES

Our new health care law is about real problems that people face every day. But not everyone understands what they will gain from the law, and that's why we need your help. There are many ways that you and your community can get involved to make sure health care reform benefits everyone.

APIAHF is working in partnership with local, state and national organizations to engage our communities and our elected officials in understanding the importance of health care reform and why it should be protected. We hope that you will join us. Included below are some examples of activities that you can organize to help build support for health care reform.

Plan a Brown Bag Lunch at Your Workplace

Many workplaces will allow employees to hold lunchtime meetings in a conference room. Ask your human resources department or management about hosting a brown bag lunch where you and your fellow employees can discuss health care reform.

Host a Health Care Reform House Party

One of the most important things we can do to protect health care reform is talk about it in our communities and educate one another about the benefits of health care reform. Host house parties during the State of the Union and political debates. Invite your friends, family members and co-workers over for an educational evening to learn about the issues. This is also a perfect opportunity to organize your community around advocacy activities such as a letter-writing campaign to Members of Congress.

Hold a Rally

Hold a mini-rally at a busy AA and NHPI gathering place in support of health care reform. Encourage members of your community to sign up for updates and take part in our online advocacy actions.

Call your Representatives and Senators

Encourage members of your community to make phone calls or send emails to their lawmakers. Phone calls let legislators know what their constituents are thinking, and this form of grassroots lobbying can have a huge impact. Members of Congress record and track the number of phone calls and emails they receive in favor of or against particular issues or legislation, which helps them decide which way to vote.

Calling your lawmakers is easy! Remember, they are your public servants, and you have the right to let them know how you feel and how they should vote on certain policies. Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121. It's best to call in the morning so you don't have any problems because of different time zones between your state and Washington, D.C. When the switchboard operator answers your call, ask to be connected to the office of your Representative or Senator.

ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITY

ENGAGE YOUR LEGISLATORS

ENGAGE THE MEDIA

Attend a Town Hall Meeting

During Congressional recesses many legislators hold town hall meetings in their states and districts to hear firsthand the needs and concerns of their constituents. Gather your friends, family members, and other constituents to attend and ask relevant questions as it pertains to AAs and NHPIs. To find an upcoming town hall meeting in your community call the nearest district offices of your Senators and Representative or search their websites for information.

Participate in a Signature Drive

- Create postcards for people to sign and mail to a specific target audience. For example, postcards could be directed at insurers and the message could encourage them to be reasonable and do the right thing for our children and families.
- Create a postcard that thanks your elected officials for working to pass health care reform and encourage them to defend it.

Get Their Attention and Make it Fun

- Host a screening of Unnatural Causes and invite community members and policy makers. The makers of the film provide discussion documents and other toolkits to using when hosting viewings: www.unnaturalcauses.org.

Send an Opinion Editorial to Your Local and Ethnic Newspapers

Policymakers read the opinion section of their local newspapers to understand the views of their constituents. Take a shot and write an opinion editorial (op-ed) to your local newspaper and ethnic newspaper. The more you write, the better you will get at it. News articles and op-eds can also give credibility to your arguments when meeting with others, so if you do get one published use it to your advantage.

Send a Letter to the Editor of Your Local and Ethnic Newspapers

Another effective strategy for advocating for health care reform is responding to stories in your local, ethnic and community newspapers with a letter to the editor. When you think a story could have provided better context to how your community will be affected by health care reform or did not include your community's perspective on an issue, write a letter to the editor that will provide readers with more information.

Use Blogs and Social Media

Talk to your friends, family members and other organizations online. Share your story today and help others learn how health reform will make a big difference in the lives of millions of Americans. Blog about it, upload a video to YouTube, and share it though social media like Facebook and Twitter.

Use Photos

To some opponents of health care reform, insuring someone with a pre-existing condition is the same as insuring a house that already burned to the ground. Help demonstrate that health reform is about people by sharing your photo and uploading it to your organization's Facebook page, APIAHF's Facebook page, or the Keep America's Families Health Facebook page. Whichever you choose, make sure to tag your friends, APIAHF and everyone in the HTA network.

Spread the Word

Use APIAHF's resources to talk about the health reform law to your friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues. Visit www.apiahf.org/hcr for resources on understanding and implementing the law. Keep up to date on the fight to protect the law from repeal and other efforts.

TELL YOUR STORY

GET ACTIVE NOW WORKSHEET (FACILITATOR VERSION)

GOAL (What do you want?): _____

TARGET(s) (Who can give this to you?): _____

MESSAGE(s) (What do they need to hear?): _____

TIMING/MEDIUM (When do we message/How?): _____

MESSENGER(s) (Who will they listen to?): _____

SCOPE	DETAILS
1. Scope of Your Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Define Your Event and Goals» Have Staff or Volunteers Assist You With Event Planning» Select the Best Date for Your Event» Create an Event Fact Sheet and Timeline» Refer to Web Resources on Event Planning
2. Estimated Event Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Determine Funding and Create an Event Budget
3. Possible Venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Find an Appropriate Venue for Your Event» Confirm Your Venue. See if Permits are Required, etc.
4. Printed/Web Materials Needed Marketing Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Find a way to advertise/ broadcast your event and draw people to take notice» Materials Creation/ Distribution Timeline and Guidelines
5. Event Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Use Event Planning Tools and Worksheets» Brief Your Event Sponsor and Provide Speaking Remarks as necessary.
6. Follow-Up Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Evaluate Your Event» Finalize the Billing, if any

Event Lead: _____

Cohort(s) to work width: Lead Communications RED Policy

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Event Lead: _____

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MARCH 23 DAY OF ACTION

EVENT EVALUATION

Organization Name _____

Type of Event _____

Event Location _____

How satisfied were you with the event's... (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent)

Organization/Coordination	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Content/Program	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Publicity	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Materials	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Turnout	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Venue	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

How many people attended the event? List the organizations and government partners that participated.

What did you like about the event? What worked well?

What would you do differently?

Additional comments:

HEALTH THROUGH ACTION COHORT LEADS

LEADERSHIP COHORT

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