

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

CONTACT: MARA LEE

(202) 225-7163

Congresswoman Matsui Statement on New Rules for Equal Visitation Rights for Hospital Patients

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) issued the following statement on new rules issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requiring equal visitation rights for all hospital patients. The new rules empower patients to designate who their visitors can be, clearing the way for same-sex couples and unmarried couples to visit each other in case of an emergency:

“The new rules announced today will ensure that no one is denied the right to have a person they love by their side in the case of emergency. Soon all hospitals participating in Medicare or Medicaid will allow patients to receive visitors of their choosing. Patients will also be able to designate the people closest to them – regardless of sexual orientation or relationship status – to make decisions about medical care.

“This change is long overdue – and it marks a critical step toward ending discrimination and upholding our nation’s promise of equality for all. I applaud President Obama and his Administration for their leadership in establishing these new regulations that make trust and a loving relationship the only qualifications needed for hospital visitation rights.”

###