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CONTACT: MARA LEE

(202) 225-7163

Congresswoman Matsui Announces Additional \$168,000 in Recovery Act Funds for Health IT Adoption

Funding Will Accelerate CalHIPSO's Work to Help Providers Switch to Electronic Health Records; Providing More Efficient Care for California Families, Seniors

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-05) announced that the California Health Information Partnership and Services Organization (CalHIPSO) North has been awarded an additional \$168,000 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to assist health care providers in adopting health information technology. This recent award increases CalHIPSO's total statewide ARRA funding to \$33 million.

“Helping our hospitals and health care providers move into the technology age is essential in improving efficiency and care,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “This federal funding will assist CalHIPSO in promoting health IT to providers, in addition to helping them qualify for the substantial incentive payments that Medicare and Medicaid will be providing to users of this technology. \$33 million in Recovery Act funding represents the significant federal investment in our state's transition to electronic health records, which will result in enhanced health care services for a large number of California residents, including thousands of Sacramento families.”

“CalHIPSO was formed by health care providers for health care providers, to help them navigate the complex world of health information technology,” said Speranza Avram, CalHIPSO's Executive Director. “We are excited about working with the federal Office of the National Coordinator as one of 62 Regional Extension Centers around the country to help more than 6,000 primary care providers in California use HIT to improve health care quality and efficiency.”

The additional funding, distributed by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will provide technical support assistance to Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) and rural hospitals so that they may qualify for substantial electronic health records (EHRs) incentive payments from Medicare and Medicaid. Nationally, incentives totaling as much as \$27.4 billion over 10 years could be expended under the program, which is administered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

CalHIPSO is also federally funded to work with primary care providers practicing in other practice types, including small private practices, community clinics, and outpatient departments of critical access, rural, and public hospitals. In Sacramento County, CalHIPSO is able to assist almost 500 providers in implementing and achieving Meaningful Use of EHRs between now and 2014.

“We recognize that the transition to electronic health records is a challenge. This additional funding recognizes the need to address these challenges and represents another important milestone in our commitment to hospitals throughout the state as they transition to electronic health records, which will help our providers offer the most efficient and effective care to California families and seniors,” Matsui added.

This grant announcement comes just a week after Congresswoman Matsui convened her Health Care Working Group in Sacramento to discuss how major hospitals, providers, and community clinics could benefit from the newly enacted Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive Program. The group also received a briefing on the Regional Extension Center program and CalHIPSO from Ms. Avram.

For more information about Congresswoman Matsui’s work in health care, please visit www.matsui.house.gov/healthcare

To see a full list of Recovery Act projects at work throughout Sacramento, please visit www.matsui.house.gov/recovery

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