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CONTACT: MARA LEE

(202) 225-7163

**Rep. Matsui: Affordable Care Act Has Put \$1 Million Back in the Pockets of Sacramento Seniors**

**SACRAMENTO, CA** – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D – Sacramento) announced that the Affordable Care Act has reduced Medicare prescription drug costs for approximately 2,130 Sacramento seniors by a total of almost one million dollars since January 2011. Since 2005, American seniors had fallen into a prescription drug coverage gap, often referred to as the “donut hole,” when they spent over \$2,840 per year on prescription drugs. Since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare Part D enrollees have saved an average of \$545 on their prescription drug costs thanks to the 50 percent discount on brand name drugs included in the healthcare law.

“The nearly one million dollars of prescription drug cost savings for Medicare beneficiaries in the Sacramento area is great news for not only our seniors, but our community as a whole,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “This is money that our seniors can now use to reinvest in local businesses, and in turn, help our region’s economy recover.”

Across the country, almost a half million individuals enrolled in Medicare’s prescription drug plan have received a 50 percent discount on their out-of-pocket costs since January 2011. Most of these discounts are helping Americans with serious medical conditions: nearly 14 percent of the benefits provided to date are for cancer drugs; more than 8 percent for drugs to help control high blood pressure and cholesterol; and another 7 percent are for drugs provided to diabetic patients. The Department of Health and Human Services has projected that this year alone, a total of 4 million Medicare enrollees will benefit from this 50 percent discount, and that, over the next ten years, enrollees could save as much as \$12,300 on prescription drug costs.

One of the over 2,000 Sacramento residents currently benefitting from the prescription drug discount enacted in last year’s health care law, is Gary, a resident of East Sacramento. Gary

takes multiple prescriptions per day, most of which are brand name drugs. He estimates that the Affordable Care Act has saved him thousands of dollars since he fell into the donut hole earlier this year.

Congresswoman Matsui, co-chair of the Congressional Seniors Task Force and member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, worked closely on the healthcare law and continues to fight against Medicare benefit cuts. Recently, she has been a strong opponent of the House-passed Republican budget proposal, which would reduce benefits and increase out-of-pocket expenses for seniors, while doing nothing to control the rising costs of healthcare. This budget proposal would eliminate all of the Medicare benefits provided by the Affordable Care Act for current enrollees – including these prescription drug discounts and free preventive check-ups for the 89,000 Medicare beneficiaries in California’s Fifth Congressional District.

“The Affordable Care Act is working – and these savings are proof of that,” added Congresswoman Matsui. “The benefits the healthcare law has provided to our nation’s seniors cannot and should not be undermined, and I will continue to fight against proposals that eliminate these improvements or otherwise cut Medicare benefits.”

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