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Rep. Matsui Joins with Service Groups to Applaud Rise in Service Across America; Sacramento

New Report Shows Rise in Volunteerism In Face of Economic Downturn

WASHINGTON, DC – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (D-CA) joined with service groups and members of the Obama Administration today to announce findings from a recent survey conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), titled “Volunteering in America 2009.” The results show that despite recent economic downturn, community service and volunteerism holds an increasingly significant place in American society, including Sacramento. Further, the study uncovered a strong trend amongst Americans drawn to volunteering as a means to become involved in their community and to aid in local recovery efforts.

“The results of this study come at a pivotal time, as it shows Congress that programs such as Teach for America, Senior Corps, and AmeriCorps are worthy of the funding secured for the upcoming year,” stated Representative Matsui. “The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has provided Americans at all stages of their life with meaningful experiences and opportunities to give back. As Co-Chair of the National Service Caucus and the Honorary Co-Chair of Hands on Sacramento, I recognize the importance of supporting and encouraging our nation’s interest in service, and will continue to advocate for these programs at the federal and local level.”

A milestone amongst those who advocate for more federal programs to incorporate service, this study is the most comprehensive data ever assembled on volunteer trends and demographics. CNCS found that a total of 61.8 million Americans volunteered through an organization in 2008, up one million from the previous year. America's volunteers dedicated more than 8 billion hours of service in 2008, worth an estimated \$162 billion. In addition to the 406.5 thousand adults in Sacramento volunteering in 2008, an extra 53,239 individuals worked with their neighbors to fix a problem or improve a condition in their community but did not serve through an organization.

“In the face of our current economic downturn, I am proud to see that Americans of all ages are becoming more engaged and invested in their own community,” said Rep. Matsui. “People across the Sacramento region, and across the nation, have picked up their tools and pitched in to help their neighbors. In Sacramento alone, over a quarter of the adult population volunteered during the past year. Those individuals combined contributed 51.6 million hours of service, which will leave a lasting impression on our community and will continue to foster a sense of pride in our city. “

As Co-Chair of the National Service Caucus, Congresswoman Matsui works closely with The White House and service leaders to advocate for national and community service programs. The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that each year engages four million Americans of all ages and backgrounds through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs. For more information, visit www.national-service.gov or to find out more about volunteer opportunities in your neighborhood and how to participate, visit www.serve.gov

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