



President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders

July 1, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Action Items

The Commissioners voted unanimously to move forward the recommendation, as amended, from the Belonging, Inclusion, Anti-Asian Hate, and Anti-Discrimination Subcommittee with Commissioners Daniel Dae Kim and Mia Ives-Rubleec recused:

1. Housing Crisis Mitigation:

- FEMA should review and assess its actions to date in response to the Maui wildfires, particularly any impact on housing costs and displacement of local residents. Actions under review should include adjustments to high rental payments for emergency housing, which displace long-term renters and drive up rental market values.
- FEMA should ensure that its memorandum released on March 22, 2024, which amends the individual assistance program and policy guide, is fully implemented, including expanded aid for low-income renters and streamlined access to housing repair funds.

2. Homelessness and Unstable Housing:

- The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness should focus on Lahaina as a demonstration program, leveraging federal, state, and local resources to resolve homelessness exacerbated by the wildfires. This should align with the Biden-Harris Administration's All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, which aims to reduce homelessness by 25 percent by January 2025.

3. Language Access and Community Trust:

- Ensure federal agencies provide language access to AA and NHPI Limited English Proficient persons by translating documents, providing interpreters, and conducting outreach in multiple languages for disaster recovery assistance.

- Engage local influencers and community leaders to build trust and ensure effective communication with the AA and NHPI community.
4. Economic Recovery and Employment:
 - As much as possible, FEMA should prioritize hiring from the community in Hawai‘i for reconstruction efforts and create job training programs to align with new job opportunities during reconstruction and recovery. These priorities should become part of FEMA’s ongoing disaster response and recovery procedures.
 - Federal agencies should coordinate with local businesses and community organizations to support economic recovery and develop an economic recovery plan centered on the sustainability and long-term growth of the local community that is not limited to the tourism and entertainment sectors.
 5. Long-Term Coordination and Leadership:
 - The President should appoint a long-term Chief Federal Response Coordinator as part of the standard operating procedures in future disaster declarations.
 - FEMA should create a local disaster relief committee of representatives from federal, state, and local governments; community stakeholders; and philanthropic organizations to streamline recovery and ensure a cohesive and efficient response.
 - FEMA should institutionalize in its standard operating procedures the practice of establishing a long-term recovery office near the disaster site with cultural monitors. This will support culturally responsive decision-making and recovery.
 6. Proactive Outreach and Support:
 - FEMA should conduct proactive outreach to the community about available assistance and federal programs and the potential health and environmental safety risks from disasters. FEMA should also prioritize sharing new information about eligibility rules for COFA citizens.
 - FEMA, in disseminating information and resources, should include diverse communication channels — like social media, community centers, and cultural events — and trusted community leaders.
 7. Future Preparedness:
 - FEMA should implement lessons learned from the Maui wildfires to improve disaster preparedness and response strategies, ensuring equity and accessibility for all affected communities, with a particular focus on underserved, undocumented, and marginalized communities.

The Commissioners voted unanimously to move forward all two recommendations of the Data Disaggregation and Education Subcommittee with Commissioners Daniel Dae Kim and Mia Ives-Rublee recused:

Recommendation One:

“Appoint separate Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders (QTPI) and Asian American members to advisory boards such as the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Sex

Characteristics (SOGISC) Subcommittee that advises the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) currently under the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and that during the month of June, the Administration, in collaboration with WHIAANHPI, engage with AA and NHPI communities to celebrate LGBTQIA2S+ members of the AA and NHPI communities. We recommend that these communications specifically use the term “Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders” (QTPI) to refer to Pacific Islanders who identify with the LGBTQIA2S+ communities.”

Recommendation Two:

“To improve access for QTPI and AA LGBTQI+ individuals to federal mental health programs, we recommend agencies such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), hold listening sessions with QTPI and Asian American advocates to optimize the engagement of QTPI and Asian American LGBTQI+ individuals seeking mental health services.”

The Commissioners voted unanimously to move forward with the two recommendation of the Health Equity Subcommittee with Commissioners Daniel Dae Kim and Mia Ives-Rublee recused:

Recommendation One:

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS) should:
 - Issue a State Health Officials (SHO) letter and a State Medicaid Directors Letter (SMDL) reinforcing states’ obligation to evaluate the FQHC PPS (Prospective Payment System) under Medicaid every 3 years to exercise their enforcement and oversight over States to provide statutorily required reimbursement to FQHCs.
 - Require language access and interpretation for all contracts with managed care organizations (MCOs) and state Medicaid departments, Medicare Advantage programs and providers, and require enhanced payment as a part of risk adjustment.
 - Require Medicaid MCOs and Medicare Advantage plans to share patient claims data with providers, particularly primary care providers, so that they may be able to identify appropriate interventions to improve patient outcomes, support overall population health and to address health disparities in the patient populations that are being served.
 - Require Medicaid MCOs and Medicare Advantage plans to collect Limited English Proficiency status, interpretation needs, and preferred languages used by managed care beneficiaries
 - Monitoring and tracking interpretation use, potentially through utilization of CPT code T1013 for Sign Language, or Oral Interpretive Services, per 15 minutes. This code should be activated by CMS for reimbursement.

Recommendation Two:

- The President should direct the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to:
 - Incorporate requirements into all procurement contracts for AI models in medicine to:
 1. Use diverse and representative datasets for training AI algorithms in medicine, by including data from the AA and NHPI populations, and communities that have historically been barred due to language or sociopolitical barriers. This can mitigate bias and ensure that AI systems provide accurate and equitable healthcare recommendations and treatments for all patients.
 2. Incorporate and report efforts that have been made to include disaggregated data of the AA and NHPI communities.
 3. Create, submit, and implement a plan for any contract to recruit and support development to improve the data representation of AA and NHPI communities.
 4. Ensure procurement contracts require datasets and the AI algorithms used in medicine be transparent and explainable to healthcare providers and patients. The purpose of the transparency is to ensure that patients and providers understand how AI systems are making decisions based on what factors. This can lead to more trust.
 - Establish federal governance and oversight bodies to hold AI companies accountable for the use of Medicaid and Medicare datasets, and other federal datasets (e.g., Health Resources and Services Administration Uniform Data System, Veterans Administration). These bodies should ensure representation from AA and NHPI communities.
 - Ensure procurement contracts include quarterly performance audits so that marginalized communities are represented within training datasets, are transparent to communities, and have equitable access to AI initiatives.
 - Ensure the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) incorporates the above guidance into health IT vendor certification.

The Commissioners voted unanimously to move forward the recommendation from the Immigration and Citizenship Status Subcommittee with Commissioners Daniel Dae Kim and Mia Ives-Rubleec recused:

“DHS should make the affirmative asylum process more just and equitable by increasing the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) staff capacity and add technological resources to address long processing times in the affirmative asylum backlog, and by issuing regulations that would provide for language interpreters during affirmative asylum interviews.”

The Commissioners voted unanimously to move forward the recommendation from the Language Access and Communications Subcommittee with Commissioners Daniel Dae Kim and Mia Ives-Rubleec recused:

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) should engage in widespread outreach and education of healthcare providers, impacted AA and NHPI individuals, and other limited English-speaking communities about new language access obligations and under recently issued Affordable Care Act section 1557 regulations. Such outreach and education should include in-language materials for impacted communities that inform limited English-speaking people about their expanded rights. Outreach and education efforts should also inform covered health entities about their expanded rights. Outreach and education efforts should also inform covered health entities about their obligations and support them in implementing these regulations.
 - HHS should prioritize development and dissemination of model policies in accordance with National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care for various types of health entities, including State Medicaid agencies, emergency rooms and emergency care entities, in managed care programs, and behavioral health programs, among others. Access to accurate and accessible resources for the operationalization of their obligations would reduce hurdles to timely implementation.
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Meeting Convened at 10:05 AM Pacific Standard Time

Judith Teruya, Senior Advisor White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) and Lead Designated Federal Officer, President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.

Judith Teruya opened the meeting and welcomed Commissioners and viewers to the ninth public meeting of the Commission. Since the last public meeting in February of 2024, Ms. Teruya noted that the six subcommittees had drafted recommendations to be shared with the full Commission and the public. The Commission is a federal advisory committee operating under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), which prescribes that meetings should take place in an open manner with public participation. Written comments to Commissioners and requests for live interpretation could be sent to aanhpicommission@hhs.gov. Updates on the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI), along with the Commission charter, bios, past meeting materials, and upcoming meeting dates, can be obtained at hhs.gov/about/whiaanhpi.

Ms. Teruya noted an in-person listening session with Commissioners replying to public comments from the Federal Register notice the next day. She articulated that any Commissioner who receives contact from a special interest should direct that information to DFOs to be shared with the entire Commission.

Ms. Teruya introduced Krystal Ka'ai, the Executive Director of the Commission and WHIAANHPI, who advises the administration on the coordination and implementation of federal programs for equity, justice, and opportunity for AA and NHPI communities — the first Native Hawaiian to occupy the role.

Welcome Remarks

Krystal Ka'ai, Executive Director, White House Initiative and President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.

Executive Director Krystal Ka'ai thanked Ms. Teruya. Sworn in by Vice President Kamala Harris in February of 2022, Ms. Ka'ai emphasized that this was the ninth public meeting, which came on the heels of dozens of subcommittee meetings and two (and soon to be three) public listening sessions. She thanked Commissioner KaYing Yang for introducing her to the very vibrant AA and NHPI communities in the Twin Cities. She reminded attendees that WHIAANHPI and the Commission celebrated their 25th anniversary since the Clinton administration this year, and under both Democratic and Republican, we have seen marked growth among AA and NHPI populations. She conveyed the pride she held for the Commission for their achievements over the last 2.5 years, such as being the most active Commission to date in terms of the volume of developed recommendations. Ms. Ka'ai noted that the Commission's recommendations have been acted upon, highlighting the live translations of AA and NHPI languages being piloted during this meeting.

Ms. Ka'ai thanked Chief Commissioner Sonal Shah and Deputy Chief Commissioner Sarah Min. She thanked the co-chairs of the Commission: Xavier Becerra, the U.S. Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, and Katherine Tai, the U.S. Trade Representative.

Welcome Remarks from the Commission Co-Chair

Secretary Xavier Becerra, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (virtual attendance)

Mr. Becerra joined virtually. His accomplishments include being the first Latino in history to hold his office, the Attorney General of California, and a twelve-term representative for a large Asian American population. Mr. Becerra thanked Ms. Ka'ai, Ms. Tai, and Erika Moritsugu for their contributions to WHIAANHPI. He recognized the commissioners and complemented their efforts in generating 77 recommendations and their contributions to combating hate crimes and promoting data disaggregation, health equity, and language access through programs, policies, and publications for Limited English Proficient (LEP) communities. He remarked that underserved AA and NHPI communities made historic gains in health care coverage since the Affordable Care Act. He thanked the Commission for showing strength and resilience at a time where AA and NHPI communities were recovering from the worst of the dual pandemics of COVID and hate.

White House Updates on Advancing Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for AA and NHPs.

Erika L. Moritsugu, Deputy Assistant to the President and Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Senior Liaison, the White House.

Mr. Becerra introduced Ms. Moritsugu, Deputy Assistant to the President and AA and NHPI Senior Liaison for the White House. She thanked Commissioner Yang for inviting them back. She highlighted three pressing issue areas within the AANHPI community, disaggregating data,

reducing gun violence, and lowering costs for families. She went on to discuss the Biden-Harris Administration's historic progress in addressing these issues.

Firstly, Ms. Moritsugu discussed the importance of the new statistical regulations on race and ethnicity data disaggregation. She highlighted that for the first time, every federal agency collecting race and ethnicity data would be minimally required to collect more detailed data such as demarcating and separating Indian, Chinese, Hmong, and Samoan statistically from each other. She noted that this would help once invisible communities finally become visible in policymaking and narrative formation. Ms. Moritsugu highlighted that this advancement marked the culmination of decades of work by leaders and the first improvement in more than 30 years in these regulations, something she has been working on her entire adult life.

Ms. Moritsugu explained that the Administration's roundtable was assessing and addressing the impact of gun violence on AA and NHPI communities. This administration has seen violent crime tick down to a 50 year low, and she described that it understood the unique impacts of gun violence on AA and NHPI communities. She highlighted that the U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy declared gun violence a public health emergency to drive added attention and resources toward prevention.

Finally, Ms. Moritsugu covered lowering costs, which she said is the Administration's top economic priority. They have pledged to use every available tool to lower costs for every federal agency, whether it is insulin, inhalers, home heating, or credit card fees. Americans today stand to save thousands of dollars. The Council of Economic Advisers noted progress in grocery prices, and they are now as affordable as they were in 2019. For example, Aldi, Target, and Walmart have announced price cuts. She also noted that the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen announced new efforts to increase the supply of housing, citing the scale of the challenge and the need to act with urgency.

Updates from the White House Office of Public Engagement

Kota Mizutani, Senior Advisor, Office of Public Engagement, the White House.

Ms. Moritsugu introduced Kota Mizutani, a Senior Advisor for Public Engagement where he serves as the Office of Public Engagement's primary liaison to AA and NHPI communities. Born and raised in Northern California, Mr. Mizutani graduated from Brown University, interned under the Obama Administration in the White House, and served as a congressional fellow for Mark Takano and a staff assistant to Don Beyer.

Mr. Mizutani thanked Ms. Ka'ai, Ms. Moritsugu, the WHIAANHPI team, Commissioner Yang, and the local community in Minnesota. He recognized the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, and the attendant redress and reparations movement, as the prime impetus for his journey to secure meaningful change at the federal level. He discussed his work with WHIAANHPI during AA and NHPI Heritage Month, such as a talk with NASA Astronaut Suni Williams — the first woman and the first Asian American to pilot a spacecraft test flight — the gun violence roundtable, and an LGBTQ+ pride month event.

Briefing from Deputy Director of OMB on Updates to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15

Nani Coloretti, Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the White House.

Mr. Mizutani introduced Ms. Coloretti, the highest-ranking Filipino American in the federal government.

Deputy Director Nani Coloretti described the OMB as the “nerve center of government” because of its ability to connect with every agency and department. She described OMB’s mission as advancing equity in government to help the government better serve all Americans. She highlighted the importance of good and accurate data collection because “you can’t serve unless you see.” Ms. Coloretti highlighted the recent updates to Statistical Policy Directive (SPD) 15, which improved data disaggregation within the government. She explained the importance of SPD 15 for unmasking the disparities that aggregation hides. For example, while total cancer rates for AA and NHPI communities are lower than those of White people, when this data is disaggregated, the rates of liver cancer for Laotian women are nine times those of White people.

Ms. Coloretti discussed the progress made toward two recommendations the Commission passed two years ago. The first recommendation included improving minimum standards for data representing AA and NHPI communities. The second centered on partnering with community advocates to make data collection relevant for outside groups.

Ms. Coloretti described how OMB has made significant progress on both recommendations. In March, SPD 15 announced updated standards for race and ethnicity data — the first change since 1997. She expressed that this advancement took the combined efforts of staff across agencies and the public: 20,000 public comments, 94 listening sessions, 3 town halls, and a tribal consultation. Coming into effect on March 28th, the policy was implemented in large part by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), which worked with federal agencies for planning data collection with the updated forms. As of now, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration’s Annual National Youth Tobacco Survey, the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s risk management, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency have been made compliant with the updated standards. Progress with non-federal entities requires additional planning and coordination for updated standards.

Ms. Coloretti looked forward to the September 25 deadline that agencies under the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission must submit an action plan for they intend to comply with the SPD 15 standards within 5 years (by March 2029). The Chief Statistician led an interagency committee of career staff to focus on implementation for the government-wide research agenda and cyclical review of the standards, which kicked off in May and was already hard at work. She noted that additional information on the updates to SPD 15 could be found at <https://spd15revision.gov>.

Ms. Ka’ai thanked Ms. Coloretti. She handed it over to Chief Commissioner Shah to provide updates and go over the charge and goals for the meeting.

Commission’s Charge and Goals for the Meeting

Sonal Shah, Chief Commissioner

Chief Commissioner Shah thanked Ms. Ka'ai and Ms. Coloretti. She welcomed the attendees to the 9th public meeting of the Commission and thanked the Commission's co-chairs, Ms. Teruya, Ms. Moritsugu, Andrew Peng, Mr. Mizutani, Erika Ninoyu, Caroline Goon, and Commissioner Yang. She mentioned that the implementation of live Mandarin, Hmong, Korean, and Vietnamese translations was a huge accomplishment. She described that the role of the Commission under the Executive Order is, through September 2025, to address the key priorities of inclusion, belonging, diversity, data disaggregation, language access, socioeconomic employment and education, and health disparities. She emphasized that the Commission makes policy recommendations and does not enact or make policy. She mentioned the rolling recommendations being implemented as suggested, thanks to Ms. Moritsugu and Ms. Ka'ai. Chief Commissioner Shah described that each subcommittee will shortly share what they have been working on. She thanked the state capital for providing them the beautiful space and mentioned that there would be an in-person listening session tomorrow. She introduced Deputy Chief Commissioner Sarah Min.

Sarah Min, Deputy Chief Commissioner

Commissioner Min thanked Chief Commissioner Shah. Commissioner Min thanked the Commission for taking the time to develop the recommendations for the President. She noted that out of the six subcommittees, five have drafted recommendations to be discussed, and the sixth subcommittee will present updates on their work. Commissioner Min noted that voting will be kept at the end of the meeting to allow for robust dialogue. She turned to Commissioner Kamal Kalsi to introduce the Belonging, Inclusion, Anti-Asian Hate, and Anti-Discrimination Subcommittee.

Belonging, Inclusion, Anti-Asian Hate, and Anti-Discrimination Subcommittee Presentation

- **Co-Chairs:** Luisa Blue and Dr. Kamal Kalsi
- **Members:** Teresita Batayola, Emily Chen, Grace Huang, Daniel Dae Kim, and Smita Shah
- **Non-Commissioner Member:** Madihha Ahussain
- **DFO:** Judith Teruya

Commissioner Dr. Kamal Kalsi introduced the subcommittee and its members. He presented the following priority issue areas such as supporting leadership and education initiatives, addressing educational equity, targeting the needs of those affected by the Lahaina tragedy, improving federal data collection of hate crimes/incidents, and much more.

Commissioner Kalsi highlighted presentations the subcommittee received from Amy Agbayani, former commissioner of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, who shared her personal perspective, as a private citizen, on the Maui wildfire response and recovery efforts.

Commissioner Kalsi also described the presentation from Michelle Ka‘uhane, former commissioner of the President’s Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, who shared her personal perspective, as a private citizen, on the Maui wildfire response and recovery efforts.

Commissioner Kalsi also highlighted the presentation from Robert J. Fenton, regional administrator of Region 9 of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), who presented on FEMA’s response to the Maui wildfires in August 2023.

Commissioner Luisa Blue began presenting the subcommittee’s **only recommendation**, explaining that the Maui wildfires’ catastrophic impacts on the AA and NHPI community still need to be reckoned with and addressed. Maui’s wildfires killed at least 100 people and destroyed thousands of structures. She explained that Lahaina is both culturally and historically important to the AA and NHPI community of Maui, causing not only severe economic, environmental, and material consequences but socio-emotional consequences as well.

Commissioner Teresita Batayola presented the recommendation that federal agencies institutionalize and/or take the following new actions to overcome the after-effects of the Maui wildfires by addressing the housing costs and displacement of local residents, support language access for AA and NHPI Limited English Proficient persons, prioritize the engagement of local influencers and community leaders, hire from the Hawai‘i community for the reconstruction efforts, and facilitate economic recovery centered on sustainability and long-term growth. Additionally, the president should appoint a Chief Federal Response Coordinator and FEMA should create a local disaster relief committee of representatives from federal, state, and local stakeholders and a long-term recovery office near the disaster site with cultural monitors, proactive outreach to the community, and implementation of lessons learned from the Maui wildfires with a particular focus on underserved, undocumented, and marginalized communities.

Discussion

Commissioner Luisa Blue expressed that the recommendation was very ambitious, and she hoped to be able to execute the elements of the recommendation as soon as possible. She also wanted to make the commission aware that she had been in touch with Filipino community leaders in San Diego who expressed that the recommendation was relevant to the ongoing community concerns that have arisen from the recent flooding, such as a rise in homelessness.

Language Access and Communications Subcommittee Presentation

- **Co-Chair:** Dr. Kimberly Chang, Victoria Huynh
- **Members:** Simon Pang
- **Ex-Officio Member:** Laureen Laglagaron
- **DFO:** Erika Ninoyu

Commissioner Dr. Kimberly Chang introduced the subcommittee and its priority issue areas, which included increasing outreach, improving language access, expanding federal funding, and etc. for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP).

Commissioner Chang highlighted that no external speakers had presented since the last commission meeting on February 27, 2024. The language access subcommittee met monthly since the last commission meeting and held ad hoc meetings as needed. The language access subcommittee met five times on April 5, April 12, April 19, May 10, and June 14 of this year.

Commissioner Chang highlighted her gratitude for the administration and the WHIAANHPI leadership, including Krystal Ka'ai, Erika Moritsugu, Sonal Shah, Sarah Min, Judith Teruya, Erika Ninoyu, and the rest of the team for enacting the recommendations that were presented by the subcommittee during the last commission meeting. This included piloting live translations in different Asian languages throughout this meeting for observing community members.

Commissioner Victoria Huynh introduced herself and presented the subcommittee's **only recommendation**. Commissioner Huynh defined section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) as a key provision that prohibits discrimination in health care programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, including discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Commissioner Huynh explained that more than one in four AAPI adults have limited English proficiency (LEP), with 12% of Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander adults and over 40% of Chinese, Bangladeshi, Vietnamese, Nepalese, and Burmese adults being LEP. Additionally, more than 50% of AAPI adults with LEP do not speak the top three most common languages, which leaves a large gap in accessibility even with increased translation services.

Commissioner Huynh explained that the use of untrained interpreters, family members, or other members of the ethnic community is problematic due to inaccurate interpretation and confidentiality risks. She highlighted that in May 2024, Health and Human Services (HHS) issued final regulations interpreting section 1557 of ACA relating to non-discrimination in health programs. This final regulation required that health programs including health care providers, insurance insurers, and HHS-administered programs inform people that language assistance services are available and in at least fifteen of the most common languages spoken by LEP in states served.

Commissioner Huynh explained that effective implementation of Section 1557 regulations should include ensuring HHS health components are fully informed about the new obligations and supported in updating federal funding grants and contracts. Effective implementation also requires educating federal funding recipients of the requirements to provide language access. She noted that HHS has developed preliminary materials describing these obligations and has worked to translate a general fact sheet into multiple languages. However, to effectively implement these regulations, impacted communities should be made aware of their rights and mechanisms to enforce their rights in user-friendly language spoken by culturally specific communities. She implored HHS to partner and allocate resources to trusted community organizations. She added that funding should be provided to community organizations to share information about the anti-discrimination goals directly to families in public settings such as in media and community forms.

Commissioner Victoria Huynh explained that language barriers impede AANHPI individuals from accessing health care and insurance coverage because health care services are often not provided in these communities' languages. This causes "disparate health outcomes for AA and PI community members."

Commissioner Victoria Huynh presented the recommendation that HHS "engage in widespread outreach and education of healthcare providers, impacted AA and NHPI individuals, and other limited English-speaking communities about new language access obligations" under ACA section 1557. The "outreach and education should include in-language materials for impacted communities" informing LEP individuals "about their expanded rights," and support covered health entities "in implementing these regulations." Additionally, that HHS "prioritize development and dissemination of model policies in accordance with National Standards for Culturally Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care for various types of health entities."

Discussion

Commissioner KaYing Yang expressed her support for the recommendation, highlighting the value of informing communities about their rights especially due to the apprehension that AAPI community members commonly have towards reaching out to the services that they need. Commissioner Yang also expressed support for the element of the recommendation suggesting the partnering of community nonprofits and organizations due to the capability of bridging the gap between community members and health care systems.

Commissioner Grace Huang strongly commended the recommendation, highlighting how federal agencies often have mechanisms for addressing discrimination that are responsible for upholding and enforcing the law. However, the method through which various parts of federal agencies and state governments implement the law needs to be considered. She expressed that providing good models to support providers is important for supporting targeted communities.

Commissioner Kimberly Chang expressed support for Commissioner Huang's comments, explaining that this recommendation paired with the ACA serves as another form of outreach to the federal government.

Commissioner Blue expressed her support for the recommendation.

Commissioner Batayola acknowledged that community-based organizations and local community leaders already supply interpretation services to provide community access to quality health care. She expressed that this resource cannot be overlooked in the implementation of this recommendation.

Commissioner Smita Shah expressed her support for the recommendation. She highlighted the importance of accessible and accurate translation services in the health care system. Commissioner Smita Shah expressed her support for Commissioner Batayola's comment and stated that providers need to take advantage of the cultural and linguistic resources already available. She drew a connection to the Hawai'i listening sessions in which translation services

were resourced outside of the targeted community and local resources were not taken advantage of. Commissioner Shah highlighted the need to support community organizations and inquired on the role that existing grant opportunities could play in this effort. She expressed that having an established cultural connection to the targeted community can be extremely beneficial.

Commissioner Sonal Shah expressed the need for local community organizations to have better access to federal funding resources. She explained the difficulty that often arises because community organizations are often not recognized as official interpreters. It needs to be considered how local community organizations could be asked to apply for federal funding even if the organizations are not official translators. She highlighted how this is an opportunity for public-private partnerships and for foundations and organizations to be seen as translating organizations.

Commissioner Smita Shah drew a connection between the issue highlighted in Commissioner Sonal Shah's comment to the problems that had arisen in Hawai'i. Commissioner Smita Shah highlighted the importance of involving local organizations in the process of enacting recommendations.

Commissioner Kevin Kim highlighted a connection between the problems faced in Hawai'i and the problems he observed in New York City. He shared that New York City gave funding to local nonprofit organizations to review the language interpretation of brochures made by professionals. It was found that there were many minor errors in the translations. Commissioner Kevin Kim expressed the importance of reaching out to local organizations.

Data Disaggregation and Education Subcommittee Presentation

- **Co-Chair:** Dr. Raynald Samoa and Dr. Robert Underwood
- **Members:** Emily Chen and Kaying Yang
- **Non-Commission Members:** Dr. Joseph Keawe Kaholokula and Dr. Ninez Ponce
- **DFO:** Erika Ninoyu

Commissioner Dr. Raynald Samoa introduced the subcommittee and its members. He highlighted the presentation the subcommittee received from Bev Platt, Senior Statistician of the Statistical & Science Policy in the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs within OMB, who shared the latest OMB updates on SPD-15 and reviewed final report recommendations.

Commissioner Samoa also highlighted the presentation the subcommittee received from Ikaika Regidor, the Education and Training Coordinator of Papa Ola Lōkahi, who discussed barriers to collecting data on AA and NHPI LGBTQIA+ individuals in the context of health care.

Commissioner Samoa discussed the presentation the subcommittee received from Amasai Jeke, the Program Coordinator of UTOPIA Washington, who shared recommendations to increase equity, inclusion, justice, and belonging for Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders in the U.S.

Commissioner Samoa also discussed the presentation the subcommittee received from Daniel Moretti, the LGBTQ+ Community Engagement Lead in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Stanford University, who shared PRIDENet's work to support meaningful engagement of LGBTQIA+

people in research and recommendations from the AANHPI Sexual or Gender Minority (SGM) Advisory Group.

Commissioner Dr. Raynald Samoa then explained the subcommittee's priority issue areas, which include ensuring equitable data inclusion, improving access to federal agency data, fostering dialogue between communities, and much more.

Commissioner Dr. Raynald Samoa presented the subcommittee's **first recommendation**, explaining that AA and NHPI are disadvantaged by "data obstacles such as data aggregation." Gender Minority AA and NHPI individuals are especially vulnerable because they "face layered oppression due to their intersectional identities that threaten the wellbeing, justice, inclusion, and belonging in the U.S."

Therefore, the subcommittee recommended that separate Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders (QTPI) and Asian American members be appointed "to advisory boards such as the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Sex Characteristics (SOGISC) Subcommittee that advises the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) currently under the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and that during the month of June, the Administration, in collaboration with WHIAANHPI, engage with AA and NHPI communities to celebrate LGBTQIA2S+ members of the AA and NHPI communities." Additionally, "that these communications specifically use the term 'Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders' (QTPI) to refer to Pacific Islanders who identify with the LGBTQIA2S+ communities."

Commissioner Samoa added that the term QTPI was recommended by the largest advocacy organization for the QTPI community. He highlighted how this term is necessitated by Western ideas of gender identity and sexuality not "mapping well" to QTPI identities.

Commissioner Dr. Raynald Samoa presented the subcommittee's **second recommendation**, explaining that "AA and NHPIs face systemic inequalities including access to mental health services. Sexual and Gender Minority AA and NHPIs face layered oppression due to their intersectional identities that threaten the wellbeing, justice, inclusion, and belonging in the U.S."

Therefore, "to improve access for QTPI and AA LGBTQI+ individuals to federal mental health programs" the subcommittee recommends "agencies such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), hold listening sessions with QTPI and Asian American advocates to increase access for QTPI and Asian American LGBTQI+ individuals seeking mental health services."

Discussion

Commissioner Teresita Batayola expressed her full support for the recommendation, highlighting the multitude of diversity within the AAPI community and the importance of being able to more accurately articulate one's identity and existence through the use of the term QTPI.

Commissioner KaYing Yang wanted to express the importance of hearing from speakers who are direct members of these targeted communities. She shared that there is a lack of data surrounding Southeast Asian LGBTQIA+ communities. However, high rates of mental health issues and family disownment of individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+ has been observed. Commissioner Yang expressed her support for the recommendation.

Commissioner Grace Huang expressed an editing concern about how the second recommendation has similar wording to the first recommendation. She asked if she could get more clarification on this choice of wording.

Commissioner Dr. Raynald Samoa explained that there was a lot of presentation data that showed that LGBT and QTPI populations had higher mental health needs than their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts. Additionally, it was evident in the literature that there was a high rate of suicide attempts in these populations. Commissioner Samoa explained that the literature shows that the likelihood of a suicide attempt occurring diminishes when kids have access to safe spaces and supportive cultural environments. Commissioner Samoa highlighted the importance of not just uplifting these communities but also trying to ensure the welfare of this generation.

Briefing by the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) and the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) on USITC reports: *U.S.-Pacific Islands Trade and Investment: Impediments and Opportunities* and *Distributional Effects of Trade and Trade Policy on U.S. Workers*

Jonathan Coleman, U.S. International Trade Commission

Jonathan Coleman introduced the briefing and explained that the presenters would be providing an overview of the recent reports created by the USITC and how the findings could be relevant to the commission.

Jonathan Coleman gave a brief background on the USITC, explaining that the USITC was a small, independent, non-partisan federal agency based in Washington, D.C, with a staff of about four hundred individuals headed by six commissioners that have been confirmed by the senate for nine-year terms. The agency has a wide range of trade related mandates but most of the work falls into three major areas:

- Investigate and make determinations in proceedings involving imports claimed to injure a domestic industry or violate U.S. intellectual property rights
- Maintain the U.S. Harmonized Tariff Schedule
- Provides independent analysis and information on tariffs, trade, and competitiveness to the President and the Congress

Jonathan Coleman explained that the USITC accomplishes these aims through factfinding investigations and reports and briefly discusses the methodology through which the USITC operates:

- The USITC Conducts factfinding reports in response to requests from the President and the Congress

- Factfinding investigations provide information and analysis on matters involving international trade, including assessments of the competitiveness of U.S. industries in global markets
- The resulting reports support policymaker's discussions and decisions relating to trade
- USITC reports are available to the public on our website, unless specifically requested to be classified for national security reasons

Jonathan Coleman goes on to introduce the discussion of the first factfinding report requested by the USTR:

Pacific Island Trade and Investment: Impediments and Opportunities (Inv. No. 332-593)

Pacific Island Request Letter from USTR

Jonathan Coleman explained that the request letter from the USTR required the USITC to:

- Provide a brief description of Pacific Island economies, focusing on production and trade
- Describe recent trends in goods and services exports from Pacific Island countries, focusing on factors impacting exports to the United States.
- Describe the use of U.S. trade preference programs by Pacific Island countries, such as the GSP program
- Describe recent trends in foreign investment in the region with special attention to investments by the U.S.
- Identify sectors where there is potential for growth in exports and foreign investment with the U.S. and globally.
- Describe impediments to potential export and investment growth and to note initiatives and assistance that might address constraints

Trends in trade in goods and services

Jonathan Coleman explained that the report was constructed over a year. The information provided in the report was based on extensive desk research, interviews with several interested parties, a public hearing hosted by the commission, and travel to the region, such as to American Samoa, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and Vanuatu.

Jonathan Coleman noted that the Pacific Islands have distinct trade patterns in terms of their exported goods. He described that the Pacific Islands' largest exports to the world included natural gas, minerals, metals, and fish. The revenue increased by 15.6% to 18.0 billion between 2017 and 2021. In contrast, the Pacific Islands largest exports to the U.S. include fish and agricultural products, such as canned tuna, bottled water, coffee, and cocoa beans. The revenue decreased by 2.4% to \$773 million between 2017 and 2021.

Jonathan Coleman explained that tourism stood out as the most significant contributor to services exports. He also explained that Fiji is the largest Pacific Islands travel services exporter both to the world and to the U.S. He noted that other business services, such as accounting, legal, consulting, research and development, architecture, and engineering services, accounted for the highest share of services exports for some economies, such as Papua New Guinea.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Jonathan Coleman explained that the main Pacific Island destinations for global FDI are Papua New Guinea and Fiji. Investments have largely been made in extractive industries, particularly in Papua New Guinea, and recent investment has been made in financial and business services and the food and beverage sector. He noted that the largest reported sources of investment are from Australia, the United States, China, and France.

Jonathan Coleman continued that U.S. FDI in the Pacific Islands is limited, typically in a few, higher-value projects. The most long-standing U.S. investments are in Papua New Guinea's extractive industries with a small number of high-value projects, such as ExxonMobil's \$19 billion LNG joint venture in Papua New Guinea. He explained that only three new U.S. investments have been reported in 2017 to 2021, located in Fiji and Papua New Guinea, including two new hotel licensing deals in Fiji and a deep-sea mining acquisition in Papua New Guinea.

Sectors with potential for growth in trade

Jonathan Coleman recognized that the area is aiming to diversify their reliance on extractive industries to sectors with greater value-added potential, especially agri-business industries.

Jonathan Coleman identified goods such as fish, nickel, spices, virgin coconut oil, kava, cocoa and chocolate, and coffee, as being sectors with good export potential. Examples of moving to higher value-added products include some tropical oil producers now moving to body products and cosmetics markets and there is also a large chocolate factory opened in Papua New Guinea using domestically produced cocoa beans, which is the first of its kind in the region.

Jonathan Coleman identified service sectors that have good export potential, such as tourism and internet-enabled services outsourcing. He explained that tourism will likely continue to grow, and there is potential for internet-enabled services outsourcing, such as call centers. This could create new job opportunities beyond the traditional sectors.

Impediments and Challenges

Jonathan Coleman noted that a challenge to trade with the specific islands is the high business costs. He explained that these costs are driven not only by the geographical isolation but by the small geographic and economic size of these nations, which leads to a lack of economic scale and diversification, which constrains institutional capacity.

Jonathan Coleman gave other examples of impediments, such as poor transportation infrastructure, the high cost and low reliability of electricity, and poor and unreliable internet access. He also explained that the small population suggests a limited labor pool and intense competition for workers. Additionally, the region is also particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts and natural disasters disrupting production and creating an unstable environment for investment.

Distributional Effects of Trade and Trade Policy on U.S. Workers (2022 and beyond) (Inv. Nos 332-587 and 332-589)

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor, U.S. International Trade Commission

What are “distributional effects”?

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor briefly provided a definition of distribution effects, which describes how trade affects workers of a certain variable characteristic along that characteristic’s distribution. She provided education as an example and explained that trade would affect workers differently regarding their education level. She highlighted that the main idea is that trade affects different workers differently.

Distributional Effects Investigation (DE 2022)

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor explained how in the inaugural DE report (2022), information gathered at public events, including round tables with workers and their representatives, an academic symposium, a public hearing, and a critical review of the literature on distributional effects were cataloged.

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor highlighted two key findings from the investigation. First, very little information was uncovered on the impact of trade on AANHPI communities. Second, gaps were noted in the distributional effects data and the academic literature

Ongoing Investigation (DE 2026)

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor described that in 2023, a letter was received from the USTR asking for five more of these distributional effects reports over the course of fifteen years, which would build upon the information gathered in the 2022 report. Stephanie Fortune-Taylor wanted to highlight that a key element of building the report required engaging in community-based open conversations with workers and their representatives. She then asked the commission to help to acquire connections to community organizations that could assist in ensuring the report thoroughly documented and included AANHPI experiences. Additionally, she made the commission aware that the USITC was looking for academic papers to be included in the symposium and as a part of their literature reviews.

Restricted-use data’s potential to improve analysis of AANHPI labor market outcomes

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor explained that USITC commission is pursuing access to restricted-use data to help answer questions about AANHPI labor market outcomes. She recalled that two things that were discussed in regards to the inaugural report was the effects of trade and the substantial data gaps. She explained that the report highlighted the analysis of labor market effects could be improved if researchers had access to restrictive-use government data sets.

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor highlighted they “could best study what they could best isolate and measure.” She went on to recall the briefing provided by OMB Deputy Director Nani Coloretti on disaggregated data, expressing the extreme importance of data disaggregation. She also highlighted that access to restricted-use data could improve statistical power and identification, which she expressed would be key to estimating the effects of trade on smaller populations.

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor explained that one of the benefits of restricted-use data is that it gives researchers access to millions as opposed to thousands of linked data records, allowing researchers to track the experience of workers over time. She explained that statistical power is crucial to being able to measure and observe the effects of trade on AANHPI subgroups. Identification was highlighted as another key area to focus on because more disaggregated data permits targeted assignment of treatment and the ability to analyze these AANHPI subgroups.

Ms. Fortune-Taylor went on to make the commission aware of contact information and various resources that were discussed during the presentation

Roberto Soberanis, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement

Assistant USTR Roberto Soberanis highlighted his experience working with Ambassador Katherine Tai and recognized her as the first AAPI USTR. He also highlighted this commission as the first co-chaired by the USTR. He recalled that in 2021 Ambassador Tai recognized the need for independent accounting of the impact on workers of past U.S. trade policy and asked the USITC to investigate the potential distributional effects of goods and services, trade, and trade policy on U.S. workers by skill, wage, salary level, gender, race, ethnicity, age, geography, and income level, especially the effect on underrepresented and underserved communities.

Assistant USTR Roberto Soberanis recalled the release of the report and its findings, explaining that it confirmed trade did have negative and disproportionate impacts on certain demographic groups, especially on Black, Hispanic, other non-White workers, and workers without a college degree. He highlighted that the report also found a lack of disaggregated data and limited research. He expressed the importance of disaggregated data on the effects of trade and trade policy on other ethnic groups, including American Indians, Alaska Natives, and AANHPI.

Assistant USTR Roberto Soberanis explained that USTR continues to work with U.S. statistical agencies to achieve better access to restricted data for researchers. He highlighted that the USITC report confirmed the need for U.S. trade policy to work better and benefit more Americans. He expressed that the Biden Administration was working to ensure that the tools that will enable it to improve policies and deliver more inclusive economic outcomes continue to be developed through trade. One such area of focus he highlighted was expanding trade and economic ties. He highlighted that the report discussed by Jonathan Coleman was representative of our commitment and deepening ties with the Pacific Islands.

He recalled that Ambassador Tai directed the USITC to conduct a detailed analysis on the Pacific Islands' trade with the U.S. to identify potential challenges and opportunities to facilitate increased trade. He explained that the USTR used this report to help inform their engagement in

the Pacific. He also explained that the USTR has leveraged the report to help shape the engagement of U.S. government departments and agencies such as USAID and USTDA to ensure that the aid and value assistance can be targeted to projects that help promote trade and economic growth. He recognized that the report isn't just useful for the U.S. government but that the regional partners can also benefit from the findings of the report to structure domestic policies and boost trade.

Discussion

Commissioner Kerry Doi highlighted goods that are commonly imported to the U.S. from the Pacific, such as pineapples and personal protective equipment (PPE). He explained that due to the costs of production outside of the U.S. being lower, it is reasonable for the U.S. to impose tariffs on these imports to protect domestic workers and firms. Commissioner Kerry Doi inquired about the economic impact of these outsourced productions in the Pacific. He inquired about any potential solutions to address a potential trade imbalance with international firms.

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor explained some of the economic impacts of imports. She expressed that in import competing industries, the impact on workers varies on education level. She highlighted that the research suggested that workers with lower education levels and jobs that are easily outsourced tend to bear the brunt of the effect of the importing and are the most likely to be displaced by it. Additionally, she explained that workers with higher education levels tend to be able to more easily transition in employment. To discuss what could be done to address this issue, she referred to Assistant USTR Roberto Soberanis.

Assistant USTR Roberto Soberanis explained that as an outcome of the report, USTR has been engaging with the region in trade and dialogue. He highlighted that USTR has held briefings with the agricultural community in the Pacific to discuss the maximization of benefits, to connect them with federal agencies, and to work within USDA sanitary requirements.

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor referred the commission to the USITC report on the tariffs instituted in early 2018, *Section 232-301 Tariffs*, for more information on Tariffs and their effects.

Commissioner Sonal Shah highlighted in Jonathan Coleman's presentation that there were several impediments to increased trade in the Pacific. She inquired about whether there were any initiatives present to overcome some of these impediments and what the commission or community do to promote trade with the Pacific Islands. Additionally, she highlighted that the inaugural presentation exposed the lack of information on the impacts of AAPI workers. She inquired about what kind of data the USITC needed and what could be done to improve the data.

Jonathan Coleman referred the commission to chapter eight of the Pacific Island Trade and Investment Report, which delves into the potential solutions to the observed impediments to increased trade. He explained that the report highlights several areas where industry and government stakeholders offered recommendations for possible enhanced U.S. engagement. He explained that these stakeholders recommended more technical training and capacity building to help Pacific Island exporters navigate and comply with various U.S. market access requirements. He highlighted Assistant USTR Roberto Soberanis' comment and explained that through

dialogue it was found that many agricultural importers described the U.S. sanitary regulations, food safety rules, and food labeling requirements as difficult. He explained that the Pacific Islands' agricultural communities are looking for more engagement opportunities and more open lines of communication with the relevant agencies such as the FDA or the USDA that might help with these potential constraints going forward.

Assistant USTR Roberto Soberanis highlighted the profound role that the Pacific Islander diaspora has in sourcing agricultural products from the Pacific Islands and continuing to expand the services sector, such as the Tourism industry. He also highlighted the Maui wildfires where there was a strong sentiment to economically revitalize the Maui community.

Stephanie Fortune-Taylor expressed that the USITC needed a large number of observations. She explained that this data can be made available through restricted-use data. She highlighted the importance of these large data sets that would allow the USITC to track workers over a large period of time to allow the linkage of the transactions of firms to the workers' economic and personal outcomes. She explained that having access to this data is imperative to them being able to do more accurate analyses.

Health Equity Subcommittee Presentation

Chief Commissioner Shah turned it over to Commissioner Kerry Doi. He made a note of Hmong U.S. gymnast Sunisa Lee, who was selected the night before to represent the country. He listed the following members for the Health Equity Subcommittee.

- **Co-Chairs:** Teresita Batayola, Kerry Doi, and Mia Ives-Ruble
- **Members:** Dr. Kimberly Chang, Dr. Kamal Kalsi, and Dr. Raynald Samoa
- **Non-Commissioner Member:** Dr. Quyen Ngo-Metzger
- **DFO:** Erika Ninoyu

Commissioner Doi introduced the subcommittee and its members and described the subcommittee's priorities, such as the health care workforce, environmental justice, gender-based violence, artificial intelligence, human trafficking, and much more.

Commissioner Doi highlighted the presentation the subcommittee received from Kei Koizumi, the Principal Deputy Director for Policy in the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), who provided administration updates on artificial intelligence and its impact on health equity for AA and NHPI communities.

Commissioner Doi also highlighted the presentation the subcommittee received from Dr. Ashwin Vasan, the Commissioner of NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, who presented on the impact of AA and NHPI mental health in New York City.

Commissioner Doi also discussed the presentation the subcommittee received from Adrian Jacques H. Ambrose, MD MPH MBA FAPA, the Senior Medical Director of Columbia University Irving Medical Center and the Chief Clinical Integration Officer of the Department of Psychiatry, who provided an overview of the impact of artificial intelligence bias on health care.

Commissioner Doi turned it over to Commissioner Batayola, who presented the **first recommendation**, explaining that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS) has failed to update guidance related to federally qualified health centers (FQHC) reimbursement, causing a lack of adequate funding and reimbursement to support AA and NHPI populations through FQHCs. He highlighted the importance of FQHCs due to the reliance of federal, state, and local governments during the COVID-19 pandemic to reach these underserved communities. He highlighted that federal, state, and local governments have failed to account for the continuance of valuable services such as language and cultural outreach and access, addressing vaccine hesitancy, social determinants of health, prevention measures, etc.

Commissioner Batayola presented the recommendation that CMS update FQHC reimbursement guidance to require state evaluations of the FQHC Prospective Payment System every three years, create mandates for language access, increase funding for these services, and much more. The subcommittee also recommends that CMS include LEP status in reimbursement models, monitor interpretation usage, and enforce language access.

Discussion

Chief Commissioner Shah called on Commissioner Chang, who agreed with the recommendation on all fronts but sought clarification on the problem statement, clarifying that the 30.5 million patients served are on Medicaid. She also noted a spelling mistake in the third bullet point in the recommendation, which misspelled “are” as “area.”

Commissioner Victoria Hyunh thanked the subcommittee for monitoring and tracking FQHCs — especially when it came to access for LEPs.

Commissioner Huang asked a question to her colleagues about how reimbursement rates could affect skills and language capacity during hiring.

Commissioner Batayola responded that payment rates had not been evaluated and adjusted in the last 10 years, but it would presumably affect the ability to hire and retain staff to maintain cultural and language competencies,

Commissioner Kevin Kim asked whether this recommendation would apply to all languages or a particular subset of them. He noted that there are more than 700 languages in New York City alone, so it would be difficult for an agency to implement the recommendation quickly without the guidance and secure the reimbursement, especially at FQHCs.

Commissioner Batayola responded that the recommendation calls for FQHCs to acknowledge the languages served and attempt to hire staff that reflect clientele (in person, contracted, or over the phone), not simply mandating every single language top-down. The provider, in accordance with the recommendation, would make sure the service was provided appropriately.

Commissioner Smita Shah emphasized that the reimbursement scheme was a creative solution, giving FQHCs the flexibility to cover languages as needed in different communities, encouraging better outcomes.

Commissioner Batayola remarked that there was a letter sent to HHS generated by the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, signed by hundreds of different health and civil rights access groups, that focused on providing an enhancement to providers for language services (which currently only operated in Spanish) and make sure other languages are included from the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, North African, Caribbean, Indigenous, or other subgroup. She stated it was consistent with the recommendations that the Commission has made in the past.

Commissioner Shah agreed, saying it is consistent with the recommendation before them in the meeting.

Commissioner Doi stated that artificial intelligence (AI) is a topic of concern these days, especially when it comes to potential negative effects on the AA and NHPI community, like how it can exacerbate health disparities through data bias, algorithmic bias, and implementation bias. He turned it over to Commissioner Kim to present the subcommittee's **second recommendation**, which follows a recommendation the Commission approved several meetings ago for use of AI in language translations.

Commissioner Kerry Doi read the problem statement as follows: "Artificial intelligence (AI) bias can exacerbate health disparities for AA and NHPI people in three ways: data bias, algorithmic bias, and implementation bias. Current concerns and challenges for AA and NHPI populations with the current rapid advance of AI technologies in health care are, that there is a: 1) lack of representation and poor disaggregation in data training sets; 2) lack of transparency in the algorithm programming and development; and 3) lack of access on the implementation side. Managing AI risk and promoting AI innovation requires effective AI governance to ensure that AA and NHPI communities are not harmed or excluded."

He presented the recommendation, which recommended the President direct HHS to require federal contractors using AI in medicine: 1) use diverse datasets and include AA and NHPI representation; 2) report efforts on disaggregated data inclusion; and 3) develop plans to improve AA and NHPI data representation. HHS should integrate these guidelines into the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) Health IT Certification Program, ensuring vendors meet bias mitigation standards, and establish a governance body for accountability with quarterly audits on CMS datasets.

Discussion

Commissioner Smita Shah thanked the subcommittee for the recommendation, calling it interesting and timely. She appreciated the formulation of the recommendation but asked if it were worthwhile to include that if an element of AI is used in the health care process, the type of data used to develop the model needs to be reported (e.g., it only used Caucasian data, but is being applied to African American and Asian Indian populations) to give patients a more accurate understanding of what information they are working with.

Chief Commissioner Sonal Shah pointed her to the fourth bullet of the recommendation, which requires that datasets used be transparent in procurement contracts.

Commissioner Chang agreed, reminding the Commission about what Ms. Coloretti said about the hidden disparities that can surface with the use of AI, especially if a provider is not aware of the training data.

Economic Equity Subcommittee Presentation

- **Co-Chair:** Ajay Bhutoria, Simon Pang, and Smita Shah
- **Members:** Luisa Blue, Kerry Doi, and Kevin Kim
- **DFO:** Judith Teruya

Commissioner Ajay Bhutoria thanked the Commission's leadership and offered some updates on the economic summits, 6 of which had been organized by WHIAANHPI, with the 7th being held the next day. They started in Philadelphia with subsequent stops in NYC, Seattle, Chicago, Hawai'i and Atlanta in partnership with the Small Business Administration, Department of Commerce, HHS, Department of Justice, and Department of Housing and Urban Development. At these gatherings, hundreds of AA and NHPI business owners and workers were met with information on federal resources, like how to register for small business loans and grants.

Commissioner Bhutoria handed it over to Commissioner Smita Shah, who first echoed the applause around the work of the WHIAANHPI team with the economic summits. She remarked on the hope, energy, and excitement in the room. Commissioner Shah explained the priorities of the subcommittee, which were creating opportunities for small businesses, improving access to job training and workforce development, creating opportunities for AA and NHPI workers, and much more.

Commissioner Shah highlighted the presentations that the economic equity subcommittee received from Van Tran, the Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Business Development in the U.S. Small Business Administration, and Geraldine Aglipay, the Region V Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, who presented on the Small Business Administration's programs that support socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses.

Commissioner Smita Shah also discussed the presentations that the subcommittee received from Jan Garth, the Branch Chief of Strategic Planning and Governance Operations, in the Office of Policy Development Research; Ayreen Cadwallader, a Program Analyst for the Office of Regional Management; Robert Olson, a data scientist for the Office of Policy Development and Research; and Allyson Parco, a workforce analyst for the Office of Policy Development and Research in the Department of Labor, who presented on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Workforce programs, and related funding and data on how these programs have supported Asian American and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander communities.

Chief Commissioner Sonal Shah thanked the subcommittee and said she looked forward to seeing their future recommendations.

Immigration and Citizenship Status Subcommittee Presentation

Commissioner Yang listed the membership of the subcommittee as follows:

- **Co-Chairs:** Grace Huang and KaYing Yang
- **Members:** Ajay Bhutoria and Dr. Robert Underwood
- **Ex-Officio Member:** Carol Wu
- **DFO:** Judith Teruya

Commissioner KaYing Yang introduced the Immigration and Citizenship Status Subcommittee and its members. Commissioner Yang described the subcommittee's priorities as achieving universal legal representation for individuals facing removal, improving language access during immigration proceedings, reducing immigration-based visa backlogs, strengthening the asylum process, and much more.

Commissioner Yang turned it over to Commissioner Huang to introduce the subcommittee's **only recommendation**. Commissioner Huang reported that individuals from the Asia-Pacific face significant challenges in accessing asylum from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) due to extensive wait times and language barriers in the application and interview process. She noted that the Commission recommends that DHS make the affirmative asylum process more just and equitable by increasing U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)' capacity to address long processing times in the affirmative asylum backlog, and by issuing regulations that would provide for language interpreters during affirmative asylum interviews.

Discussion

Commissioner Blue wondered whether the subcommittee considered any private sector, for-profit companies that are trying to house people at the border and how tight the oversight is.

Commissioner Huang said that has not been a point of discussion in the subcommittee, which was more focused on the overall affirmative asylum process and how it is affecting AA and NHPI communities.

Chief Commissioner Shah prompted her to get more information to the subcommittee and redirected the focus to comments on the recommendation at hand.

Commissioner Bhutoria reported updates on the subcommittee recommendation on H-1B stamping, domestic visa renewals for certain H-1B visa applicants, the 540-day automatic extension, and streamlining visa processes. He remarked that these steps are important for AA and NHPI communities.

Commissioner Chang agrees with the recommendation but asked a clarifying question about the enforcement and accountability of the law that asylum application interviews must be conducted within 45 days.

Commissioner Huang stated that the requirement has been a longstanding fact of the law, and sometimes, someone sues because their application has not been processed, and it gets moved along. Most times, that does not happen — usually based on how many resources people have. DHS has whatever Congress allocates for it, and we have seen the number of adjudicators significantly decline, partly due to a defunding of the staff. Part of the problem, Commissioner Huang noted, is that the affirmative immigration process could be funded through fees paid by applicants, but there is not an asylum filing fee budgeting. She made this recommendation to draw more appropriations to bring caseload numbers down and make sure the group of folks does not get lost when all the media attention is elsewhere at the moment.

Chief Commissioner Shah asked how quickly the processing happened during COVID-19.

Commissioner Huang replied that it did not happen particularly fast with not many going into the affirmative process. There were lessons learned from the arrival of large numbers of Afghan immigrants through an affirmative process with provided interpreters. When people bring interpreters, DHS has monitors they pay to ensure the translation is accurate. If that is already happening, Commissioner Huang posed the question of how much of a stretch it would be to provide an interpreter.

Chief Commissioner Shah referred to the proposition that DHS should make its process more just and equitable to increase capacity to address processing times. She asked what capacity meant exactly. Money? People?

Commissioner Huang said the word relates primarily to people (which is often a problem of money) but, more broadly, how DHS allocates its resources so that people are not left languishing.

Chief Commissioner Shah said they could work on fine-tuning the word capacity during the break. She repeated her appreciation for the thought and time that went into the recommendation.

Commission Discussion and Vote on the Subcommittee's Recommendations

Commissioner Sarah Min Presented the recommendations from the Belonging, Inclusion, Anti-Asian Hate, Anti-Discrimination, Data Disaggregation and Education, Health Equity, Immigration and Citizenship Status, and Language Access Subcommittees, and the full Commission voted separately on each recommendation. Commissioners Daniel Dae Kim and Mia Ives-Ruble were recused.

Belonging, Inclusion, Anti-Asian Hate, Anti-Discrimination Subcommittee

Actions Taken:

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the recommendation, focused on executive branch agencies institutionalizing disaster relief infrastructure in the wake of the Maui wildfires:

- The Commission recommends that executive branch agencies institutionalize and/or take the following new actions:
 1. Housing Crisis Mitigation:
 - FEMA should review and assess its actions to date in response to the Maui wildfires, particularly any impacts to housing costs and displacement of local residents. Actions under review should include adjustments to high rental payments for emergency housing, which displace long-term renters and drive up rental market values.
 - FEMA should ensure that its memorandum released on March 22, 2024, which amends the individual assistance program and policy guide is fully implemented including expanded aid for low-income renters and streamlined access to housing funds.
 2. Homelessness and Unstable Housing:
 - The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness should focus on Lahaina as a demonstration program, leveraging federal, state, and local resources to resolve homelessness exacerbated by the wildfires. This should align with the Biden-Harris Administration's *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, which aims to reduce homelessness by 25 percent by January 2025.
 3. Language Access and Community Trust:
 - Ensure federal agencies provide language access to AA and NHPI Limited English Proficient persons by translating documents, providing interpreters, and conducting outreach in multiple languages for disaster recovery assistance.
 - Engage local influencers and community leaders to build trust and ensure effective communication with the AA and NHPI community.
 4. Economic Recovery and Employment:
 - As much as possible, FEMA should prioritize hiring from the community in Hawai'i for reconstruction efforts and create job training programs to align with new job opportunities during reconstruction and recovery. These priorities should become part of FEMA's ongoing disaster response and recovery procedures.
 - Federal agencies should coordinate with local businesses and community organizations to support economic recovery and develop an economic recovery plan centered on the sustainability and long-term growth of the local community that is not limited to the tourism and entertainment sectors.
 5. Long-Term Coordination and Leadership:
 - The president should appoint a long-term Chief Federal Response Coordinator as part of the standard operating procedures in future disaster declarations.
 - FEMA should create a local disaster relief committee of representatives from federal, state, and local governments; community stakeholders; and philanthropic organizations to streamline recovery and ensure a cohesive and efficient response.

- FEMA should institutionalize in its standard operating procedures the practice of establishing a long-term recovery office near the disaster site with cultural monitors. This will support culturally responsive decision-making and recovery.
6. Proactive Outreach and Support:
 - FEMA should conduct proactive outreach to the community about available assistance and federal programs and the potential health and environmental safety risks from disasters. FEMA should also prioritize sharing new information about eligibility rules for COFA citizens.
 - FEMA, in disseminating information and resources, should include diverse communication channels – like social media, community centers, and cultural events – and trusted community leaders.
 7. Future Preparedness:
 - FEMA should implement lessons learned from the Maui wildfires to improve disaster preparedness and response strategies, ensuring equity and accessibility for all affected communities, with a particular focus on underserved, undocumented, and marginalized communities.

Language Access Subcommittee

Actions Taken:

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the recommendation, focused on HHS institutionalizing better practices for treating patients with LEP:

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) should engage in widespread outreach and education of healthcare providers, impacted AA and NHPI individuals, and other limited English-speaking communities about new language access obligations and under recently issued Affordable Care Act section 1557 regulations. Such outreach and education should include in-language materials for impacted communities that inform limited English-speaking people about their expanded rights. Outreach and education efforts should also inform covered health entities about their expanded rights. Outreach and education efforts should also inform covered health entities about their obligations and support them in implementing these regulations.
- HHS should prioritize development and dissemination of model policies in accordance with National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care for various types of health entities, including State Medicaid agencies, emergency rooms and emergency care entities, in managed care programs, and behavioral health programs, among others. Access to accurate and accessible resources for the operationalization of their obligations would reduce hurdles to timely implementation.

Data Disaggregation and Education Subcommittee

Actions Taken:

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the first recommendation, to appoint QTPI representatives to advisory boards:

- Appoint separate Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders (QTPI) and Asian American members to advisory boards such as the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Sex Characteristics (SOGISC) Subcommittee that advises the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) currently under the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and that during the month of June, the Administration, in collaboration with WHIAANHPI, engage with AA and NHPI communities to celebrate LGBTQIA2S+ members of the AA and NHPI communities. We recommend that these communications specifically use the term “Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders” (QTPI) to refer to Pacific Islanders who identify with the LGBTQIA2S+ communities.

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the second recommendation as amended, which focused on improving QTPI and AA LGBTQI+ access to federal mental health programs:

- To improve access for QTPI and AA LGBTQI+ individuals to federal mental health programs, we recommend agencies such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), hold listening sessions with QTPI and Asian American advocates to ~~increase access for~~ **optimize the engagement of** QTPI and Asian American LGBTQI+ individuals seeking mental health services.

Health Equity Subcommittee

Actions Taken:

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the first recommendation as amended, which asked CMS to focus on ensuring their new regulations are being implemented:

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS) should:
 - Issue a State Health Officials (SHO) letter and a State Medicaid Directors Letter (SMDL) reinforcing states’ obligation to evaluate the FQHC PPS (Prospective Payment System) under Medicaid every 3 years to exercise their enforcement and oversight over States to provide statutorily required reimbursement to FQHCs.
 - Require language access and interpretation for all contracts with managed care organizations (MCOs) and state Medicaid departments, Medicare Advantage programs and providers, and require enhanced payment as a part of risk adjustment.
 - Require Medicaid MCOs and Medicare Advantage plans to share patient claims data with providers, particularly primary care providers, so that they may be able to identify appropriate interventions to improve patient outcomes, support overall population health and to address health disparities in the patient populations that **are a** being served.

- Require Medicaid MCOs and Medicare Advantage plans to collect Limited English Proficiency status, interpretation needs, and preferred languages used by managed care beneficiaries

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the recommendation as amended, to address the inequity and disadvantage that AI creates for the AA and NHPI communities within health care:

- The President should direct the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to:
 - Incorporate requirements into all procurement contracts for AI models in medicine to:
 1. Use diverse and representative datasets for training AI algorithms in medicine, by including data from the AA and NHPI populations, and communities that have historically been barred due to language or sociopolitical barriers. This can mitigate bias and ensure that AI systems provide accurate and equitable healthcare recommendations and treatments for all patients.
 2. Incorporate and report efforts that have been made to include disaggregated data of the AA and NHPI communities.
 3. Create, submit, and implement a plan for any contract to recruit and support development to improve the data representation of AA and NHPI communities.
 4. Ensure procurement contracts require **datasets and the** AI algorithms used in medicine be transparent and explainable to healthcare providers and patients. The purpose of the transparency is to ensure that patients and providers understand how AI systems are making decisions based on what factors. This can lead to more trust.
 - Establish federal governance and oversight bodies to hold AI companies accountable for the use of Medicaid and Medicare datasets, and other federal datasets (e.g., Health Resources and Services Administration Uniform Data System, Veterans Administration). These bodies should ensure representation from AA and NHPI communities.
 - Ensure procurement contracts include quarterly performance audits so that marginalized communities are represented within training datasets, are transparent to communities, and have equitable access to AI initiatives.
 - Ensure the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) incorporates the above guidance into health IT vendor certification.

Immigration and Citizen Status Subcommittee

Actions Taken:

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the recommendation as amended, asking DHS to improve the affirmative asylum process:

- DHS should make the affirmative asylum process more just and equitable by increasing the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) **staff capacity and add technological resources** to address long processing times in the affirmative asylum backlog, and by issuing regulations that would provide for language interpreters during affirmative asylum interviews.

Commission Discussion – Final Report

Commissioner Sarah Min explained to the audience that each subcommittee is working on providing a summary of the work they have done over the last two and a half years as a contribution to the final report that will be published in the fall. Commissioner Min thanked the members of the writing subgroup, which she expressed had been working on the report over the last five weeks. The members of the writing subgroup include Judith Teruya and Commissioner(s) Grace Huang, Dr. Kimberly Chang, Victoria Huynh, Sonal Shah, and Sarah Min.

Commissioner Sarah Min explained that the writing subgroup is responsible for reassuring that the themes across the commissions work are apparent and the initiative milestones are being reached. She highlighted that the narratives end with a call to action. She expressed that the writing subgroup is currently reviewing all of the summaries that the subcommittees produced and that the subcommittees would be working over the summer to create a number of drafts to be presented at the next commission meeting.

Commissioner Dr. Kimberly Chang inquired about where potential new ideas for recommendations could be inserted for problems that have not yet been addressed by the committee. Because the subcommittees are no longer writing recommendations, she wondered where ideas for advancing equity and opportunity in the AANHPI community could be inserted in the report.

Commissioner Dr. Kamal Kalsi expressed his concern over the current insurance system. He highlighted how the insurance system is plagued by a lack of transparency and explained that this issue disproportionately impacts AAPI communities. He explained that there are five key areas that cause negative effects on the AAPI community. First, the Kaiser Family Foundation study found that insurance denial rates could be extremely high ranging from 2 to 49 percent. Second, physicians spend an average 16.4 hours a week working on authorization tasks, which leads to delays in patient care. Third, the federal government has not expanded or revised transparency reporting requirements in years for insurance providers, which inhibits consumers from comparing health care plans based on denial rates. Fourth, denials and delays in patient care can lead to serious adverse events including hospitalization, disability, and death. Lastly, prior authorization can have significant economic consequences for physician practices with an average of 40 percent of physicians reporting that they have hired staff that works exclusively on prior authorizations. He highlighted that this is an area that can have a major impact on the AANHPI community. Commissioner Kalsi proposed that these issues could be addressed in a possible recommendation or as a suggested recommendation for the next commission.

Commissioner Luisa Blue explained that a call to action should address the items that the next advisory commission needs to continue to work on. She inquired about how the large amount of recommendations that the commission has should be prioritized in the call to action. She also inquired about what recommendations have gone to the president and what recommendations are still going through the process.

Commissioner Teresita Batayola expressed her appreciation for Commissioner Dr. Kimberly Chang's comment. She recalled and expressed her appreciation for Commissioner Mia Ives-Ruble and explained that a day prior, a listening session was held surrounding the issues of Asian American adoptees. She expressed that the issues raised in the session should be followed up on by the commission. She inquired about what could be done to address these pressing issues. She highlighted that it is imperative for the commission to keep these issues, that need recommendations at the highest level, alive.

Commissioner Sonal Shah expressed that if there are things to prepare for the next commission in the form of recommendations for someone to carry forward, they should be prepared for the next commission. She highlighted that the advantage of the recommendation isn't just the participation of the president but the participation of the federal agencies in addressing these community issues. She explained that it should be highlighted in the report the things that the next commission should treat as a priority.

Commissioner Sonal Shah drew attention to the time constraints that will be placed on the commission during the next meeting and that the meeting won't have a lot of time for new recommendations. She explained that the next meeting will have to focus on the final report and that the commissioners should hold a big picture perspective while discussing the report, taking into consideration the intent of the commission's work and how the next commission can be set up for success in continuing the work that has been done. Commissioner Shah expressed her gratitude for the writing subgroup. She highlighted that the report is for people to consume and not for policy makers to consume and that this is extremely important to keep in mind as the report is being developed.

Commissioner Grace Huang expressed in response to Commissioner Luisa Blue that it is the various subcommittee's responsibility to determine the prioritized recommendations and not the writing committee's responsibility.

Commissioner Luisa Blue expressed that she thought it would be helpful if some criteria for subcommittees could be developed to assist the subcommittees in deciding how the recommendations should be prioritized.

Commissioner Sarah Min asked for Commissioner Luisa Blue for clarification on her comment and if she was referring to the report.

Commissioner Luisa Blue explained that the criteria would help clarify what recommendations should be followed up on. Commissioner Blue expressed that it is important to have on record that the commission put effort in prioritizing the large amount of recommendations that were created.

Commissioner Sarah Min explained that the process for developing the report is iterative, which suggests that the drafts will go to the co-chairs of the subcommittees for revision. She continued that the drafts will return to the subcommittees, and it is their responsibility to decide what recommendations they want to be carried over as recommendations for the next commission.

Commissioner Kevin Kim highlighted the importance of having the federal agencies and the AANHPI community read the report. He expressed the profound difficulty in accomplishing this due to the large number of recommendations. He commented that it might be necessary for a small group to produce a more deliverable form of the report to get the public more interested in hearing about what the commission's recommendations were.

Commissioner Victoria Huynh highlighted the importance of having a conversation about the next steps for the communication component for the subcommittees.

Commissioner Sarah Min explained that these communication efforts will happen in conjunction with WHIAANHPI and the Office of Public Engagement (OPE) as to how the report is disseminated, distributed, and promoted. Commissioner Min highlighted that the report will be offered in at least three translated languages and that it is important to discuss other mediums of promoting the report as well.

Commissioner Sonal Shah jokingly explained that the reason the initial audience is prioritized is because it is imperative that the report can be read by those who can implement them. She inquired about how the commission could convey to the communities represented by the commission what has been done. She highlighted that the commission should prioritize the implementation of the commission's work in government, which might come at the cost of communications with the general public.

Commissioner Ajay Bhutoria recommended that creating 2-3 minute videos of the recommendations and placing it on the commissions website could be considered as a strategy for distributing the material to the general public.

Commissioner Sonal Shah expressed her gratitude for all the commissioner's comments and all the work that has been done. She also expressed her gratitude for the commissioners and the subcommittee's efforts in developing the 77+ recommendations. She highlighted that their work isn't just important for the communities that they represent but for the government to operate in a way that represents all of the country. She highlighted the importance of remaining focused during the next commission meeting. Commissioner Shah continued that once the report is read and agreed upon then a conversation could be had about how the report can be read and heard. She highlighted that it is important to set the next commission up for success so they can continue this commission's work.

Commissioner KaYing Yang expressed that it should not be taken for granted that community members understand what is happening in Washington D.C. She expressed that she is committed to working with whatever team to make sure the work that is being done in the commissions turns into something actionable at the local level. Commissioner Yang wanted to take a second to

welcome the commission to St. Paul, Minnesota, the largest population of Hmong people in the United States. She highlighted that people often don't connect policies with their daily lives and that a lot of the time community members are dependent on community organizations to translate to daily lives. She continued that having these meetings are extremely important and that she hopes this tradition carries on. She highlighted the importance of partnering with community organizations and that translating into different languages and practical actionable steps requires a lot of time that can be easily wasted if the commission is not careful. She expressed her appreciation for the commission being in Minnesota and that this is a demonstration of Washington D.C. caring about the midwest. She continued to express that she hoped the commission would return and ensure that community members and impacted communities are involved in the commission's work.

Commissioner Sonal Shah commended Commissioner KaYing Yang for being an incredible advocate and expressed her gratitude for her welcome. She highlighted that the commissioners serve as translators and implored the commissioners to consider what they all could do and how they all could go back to their communities and explain the differences between federal, state, and local. She continued to implore the commission to consider how they could better help with translation. She highlighted the importance of empowering each member of their communities with the relevance of this work and how this work affects daily life.

Commissioner Kevin Kim expressed his gratitude for the live interpretation, which was piloted during this meeting.

Closing Remarks from Commission Co-Chair

Ambassador Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative

Commissioner Sonal Shah introduced Ambassador Katherine Tai, the commission's co-chair. Ambassador Katherine Tai was sworn in as the 19th U.S. Trade Representative on March 18th, 2021. As a member of the president's cabinet Ambassador Tai is the principal advisor, negotiator, and spokesperson on U.S. trade policy. Prior to her unanimous senate confirmation, Ambassador Tai spent most of her career in public service, focusing on international economic diplomacy, monitoring, and enforcement, including as chief trade council and trade subcommittee staff director for the house ways and means committee in the U.S. congress and is an experienced world trade organization litigator. She previously developed and tried cases for the office of the USTR and eventually became the chief council for China trade and enforcement.

Commissioner Sonal Shah commended Ambassador Katherine Tai for her work and highlighted her position as the first AAPI leader of the USTR.

Ambassador Katherine Tai recalled the commission meeting in vegas where it was jokingly said that "what happens in vegas stays in vegas, but not in your case." She expressed that the common saying didn't apply to the commission because of the tangible impact that their work has. She expressed her gratitude to the commissioners and her amazement at the commissioners' ability to represent the cross sections and intersectionalities of their unique subject positions within their economic and societal standings.

Ambassador Katherine Tai recalled the commission's contributions. She highlighted that the meeting was being simultaneously interpreted in Hmong, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Korean. She acknowledged that this was a direct result of the Language Access subcommittee's recommendation in February 2024, which asked to ensure live interpretation of all commission meetings. She suggested that this was a practical and tangible way to tackle barriers in the AAPI community. She also commended the recommendation presented in May 2022 to update the minimum standards for federal data on race and ethnicity. She recalled Deputy Director Nani Coloretti's comments in which she discussed OMB's announcement, which promised the implementation of the recommendation. She highlighted the profound impact that this change will have on the communities that the commission serves and the important relationship between data and policy making.

Ambassador Tai recalled the briefing from the USITC and highlighted the important relationship between data and the work that is being done at the USTR in improving U.S. trade policy. She recalled requesting from the USITC the development of two reports. The first was the "Distributional Effects of Trade and Trade Policy on U.S. Workers." The second requested report was the "Pacific Island Trade and Investment: Impediments and Opportunities." She highlighted that the first report illuminated the lack of data gathered on the effects of trade on AA and NHPI communities. This implored Ambassador Tai to request the USITC to collect additional data specific to the AA and NHPI community in January 2024. The second report outlined several impediments to trade, such as climate change and infrastructure challenges. She highlighted that these studies and investigations are the starting point for better understanding how the USTR can deploy trade policies that benefit more people.

Ambassador Tai expressed the value of the commission's input, highlighting the amount of time and energy each commissioner has put into their work. She continued to recall the achievements of the commission, which included the approval of 77 recommendations that were transmitted to the president. She reiterated the lasting and significant impact that the commission has on the communities they serve.

Ambassador Tai recognized and expressed her gratitude for Commissioner Ajay Bhutoria, who is rolling off the commission. She also recognized and expressed her gratitude for Former Commissioner Naheed Quereshi, who rolled off the commission earlier this year.

Ambassador Tai expressed that the commission's work will continue as long as there is prejudice, discrimination, hate crimes, and inequities that exist. She highlighted that the commission has the Biden Administration's complete support and that this support is reciprocal. She continued to highlight the profound power of acting as a collective and although the commission represents an extremely diverse community, they are united by a common cause to perfect this union and improve it for future generations. She explained that this characteristic is what makes the communities the commissioners are a part of and represent resilient.

Ambassador Tai expressed the importance of inclusivity and the upcoming listening session and economic summit. She explained that inclusivity is a guiding principle and a vision for the U.S. She recalled a statement made by President Biden, "this administration is building an economy

where more people get their fair share of the pie.” She explained that the commission's work is about expanding the table and bringing more voices to the table. She continued that the commission's work is also about incorporating more of those voices into policies and crafting tangible and practical solutions to people’s problems.

Ambassador Tai recalled the shootings in Monterey Park and Half Moon Bay and the Maui wildfires. She expressed the emotional consequences of these events. She explained her work in meetings with the members of the affected communities. She highlighted the importance of making sure that the policies work for these affected community members.

Ambassador Tai expressed her gratitude towards Secretary Becerra, Deputy Director Nani Coloretti, the USITC team, Senior Advisor Kota Mizutani, Deputy Assistant Erika Moritsugu, and Krystal Ka‘ai. The meeting is adjourned.

In Attendance:

Teresita Batayola
Ajay Bhutoria Luisa
Blue
Dr. Kimberly Chang
Emily Chen
Kerry Doi Caroline
Goon Grace Huang
Victoria Huynh
Krystal Ka‘ai
Dr. Kamal Kalsi
Kevin Kim
Sarah Min
Erika Ninoyu
Simon Pang
Andrew Peng
Dr. Raynald Samoa
Smita Shah
Sonal Shah
Judith Teruya
Robert Underwood
KaYing Yang