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Chinese American Citizens Alliance

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C.A.C.A. Remembers Hawaiian Senator and Veterans Advocate Daniel Akaka

San Francisco, April 9, 2018 — The Chinese American Citizens Alliance (C.A.C.A.) remembers Daniel Akaka, a popular legislator who brought belated recognition to Asian-American veterans of World War II. The three-term United States Senator of Hawaii, who retired in 2012, died Friday, April 6, in Honolulu. He was 93.

Of Chinese and Native Hawaiian heritage, Senator Akaka started his career as an educator and eventually led Hawaii's anti-poverty efforts until his election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1976, the first-ever native-born Hawaiian elected to Congress. In 1990, then-Rep. Akaka was appointed to fill the seat of U.S. Senator Spark M. Matsunaga, who died in office. Elected to a full Senate term in 1994, Mr. Akaka went on to chair the Veterans' Affairs Committee and sit on the Indian Affairs Committee.

A World War II veteran himself, Senator Akaka orchestrated the reassessment of wartime service records of members of the Army's highly decorated 442nd Regimental Combat Team and 100th Infantry Battalion. Both were composed almost entirely of Japanese American soldiers and participated in some of the heaviest combat in the European Theater. As a result of a Defense Department reexamination, more than 20 Asian-American veterans of World War II were awarded the Medal of Honor in 2000, including Senator Akaka's fellow Senate colleague from Hawaii, Daniel K. Inouye.

C.A.C.A. pays tribute to Senator Akaka as an inspiration for its own efforts to honor combat veterans. The Alliance's Chinese American World War II Veterans' Recognition Project seeks the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor bestowed by Congress, for the estimated 20,000 uniformed Chinese-Americans of the U.S. Armed Forces during the Second World War.

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Web: www.CACAnational.org
Chinese American Citizens Alliance

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance, established in 1895, is among the oldest civil rights organizations in the United States. Headquartered in San Francisco with chapter/lodges in Albuquerque (NM), Boston (MA), Chicago (IL), Greater San Gabriel Valley (CA), Greater New York (NY), Houston (TX), Las Vegas (NV), Los Angeles (CA), Mississippi, Oakland (CA), Peninsula (CA), Portland (OR), Phoenix (AZ), Salinas (CA), San Antonio (TX), San Francisco (CA), Seattle (WA) and Washington, D.C., the Alliance addresses issues regarding voter education, political participation, racial discrimination and hate crimes, and supports youth leadership training programs and equal employment opportunities for all Chinese Americans.