



July 10, 2014

### **In Appreciation of HHS Assistant Secretary for Health Dr. Howard Koh**

Hep B United and our national coalition partners would like to express our deep appreciation to Dr. Howard Koh for his service as the Assistant Secretary for Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Throughout his tenure, Dr. Koh has been dedicated to addressing racial and ethnic disparities in health, especially to improving the health of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. We are truly grateful to Dr. Koh for being a tireless ally and champion of viral hepatitis and thank him for highlighting the staggering disparate impact hepatitis B has on the Asian American and Pacific Islander community.

Under his leadership, HHS agencies have made historic advancements in raising the profile of viral hepatitis and liver cancer as an urgent public health priority.

Through his efforts, we have the first comprehensive HHS cross-agency action plan, *Combating the Silent Epidemic of Viral Hepatitis: Action Plan for the Prevention, Care, & Treatment of Viral Hepatitis*, which was released in 2012 and renewed in May 2014 for another two years. Dr. Koh approved the first federal-community partnership to promote *Know Hepatitis B*, a national multi-lingual campaign highlighting the importance of hepatitis B testing among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The campaign was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is co-branded with Hep B United, a national coalition of local hepatitis B coalitions across the country, and private and federal partners. In addition, Dr. Koh's support was invaluable to the landmark settlement reached by the U.S. Department of Justice that added hepatitis B as a protected condition under the Americans with Disabilities Act in 2013.

After more than five years as Assistant Secretary for Health, it was announced that Dr. Koh would be leaving HHS to assume a new position at the Harvard School of Public Health as Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership.

We remain forever grateful for the benefits from his work and will strive to ensure Dr. Koh's legacy in the advancement of viral hepatitis continues. We wish him well in his academic career and future endeavors.

With Greatest Appreciation,

## Hep B United

*Hep B United is a national coalition to address the public health challenge of hepatitis B by increasing awareness, screening, vaccination and linkage to care for all Americans, but in particular, for high-risk Asian American and Pacific Islander populations who are disproportionately impacted. For more information about Hep B United and its local coalition members, please visit <http://hepbunited.org>.*