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Asian Pacific American Coalition of Connecticut celebrates the Lunar New Year

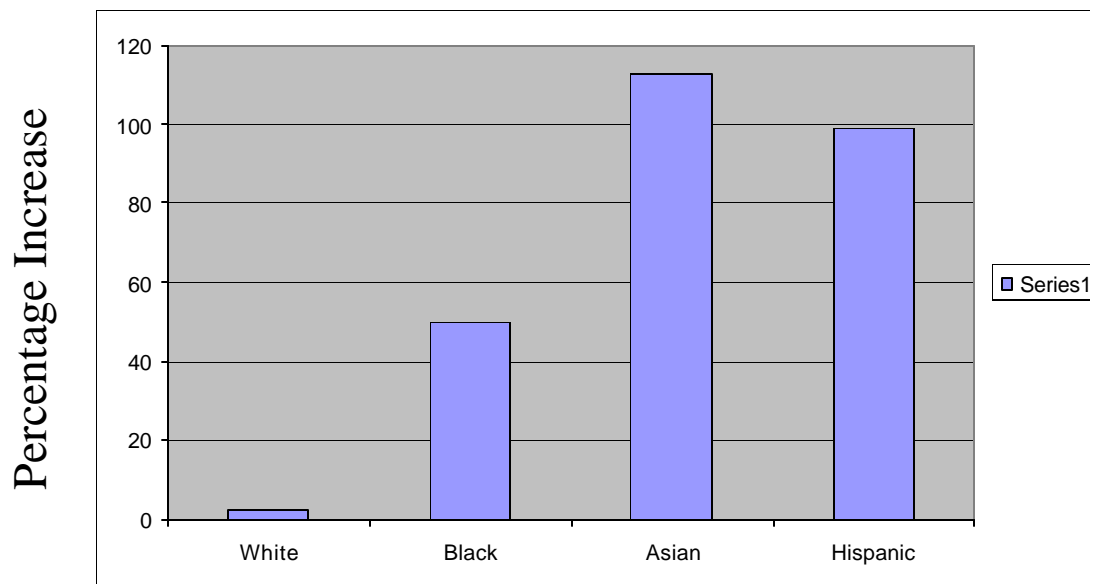
Hartford, CT February 7, 2008 – The Asian Pacific American Coalition (APAC), will host its second annual celebration of the Chinese Lunar New Year **Thursday, February 14, 2008** at the Legislative Office Building, Hartford, Connecticut. APAC is a grass roots organization that is bringing together the vast and fast growing Asian community together to advocate for better services and help promote economic growth.

Feb 7th is the first day of the Year. Chinese New Year is also known as the Spring Festival, which is the beginning of spring. This is the Year of the Rat. The Chinese Zodiac consists of a 12 year cycle, each year of which is named after a different animal that imparts distinct characteristics to its year. Traditional Asian foods and refreshments will be served. Community and legislative leaders will be on hand to offer greetings.

Connecticut's Asian Pacific community is a diverse community and one of the fastest growing racial groups in the state. From 2000 to 2005, the population in Connecticut grew more than 30%, from approximately 84,000 to over 108,000. Projections show between 2000 and 2030, the population will increase by 113 percent.

Connecticut's Asian population comes from nearly 50 countries and ethnic groups, including East Asians, Pacific Islanders, Southeast Asians, South Asians and Asian-Latino Americans. These groups within the Asian community speak numerous languages, practice different religions and have markedly different needs and characteristics.

PROJECTED PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN CONNECTICUT POPULATION GROUPS



Connecticut's Asian population will grow by more than 113 percent between 2000 and 2025, the Hispanic population by more than 99 percent, the black population by more than 50 percent, and the white population by only 2.5 percent.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Projected State Populations, by Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin: 1995-2025.

Freshman State Rep. William Tong (Democrat, Stamford, New Canaan) the first and only elected Asian Pacific American in the Connecticut General Assembly introduced a bill last session to create an Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission. "The Asian American community is one of the fastest growing ethnic minority communities in Connecticut," says Tong. "Unfortunately, the community is growing faster than awareness of its needs."

Many are in desperate need of services including mental health and physical health services; job training; English language education; and access to courts and the legal system. Asians continually face bias, discrimination, and hate crimes, which are often overlooked or under-reported. Almost 8,000 in Connecticut live in poverty. The bill is anticipated to be re-introduced this session.

Location – **Legislative Office Building, Atrium, Hartford**

Time: **5:00 PM - 7:00 PM, Thursday, Feb. 14, 2008**

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