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Washington, DC 20515

PRESS RELEASE

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**Congresswoman Hirono Hosts Panel Discussion on First-ever
Poll Focused on Women Immigrants in the U.S.**

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Congresswoman Mazie K. Hirono (D-Hawai‘i) today hosted a panel to discuss the results of a first-ever poll on the status of women immigrants in America. The discussion, titled **“Women Immigrants: The New Face of Migration in America,”** centered on the implications of the historic poll taken by the non-profit think tank, **New American Media.**

The report, titled **“Women Immigrants: Stewards of the 21st Century,”** includes the current demographics of immigrant women, reasons for immigrating, and whether they brought their families or came alone. It also explains that while men made up the majority of immigrants as recently as the second half of the 20th century, today that balance has shifted to the point where women actually comprise half or more of the immigrants entering this country. In fact, women now make up more than half of the migrant population, worldwide.

“The challenges facing the women documented in this study are tremendous,” said Congresswoman Hirono. “Many speak little or no English, while facing anti-immigrant discrimination, lack of healthcare, while working low-paying jobs that pay just a fraction of the wages they earned in their home countries.”

Some 60 people attended the panel discussion, which included staff from offices for Members of Congress and Congressional Committees, as well as representatives from civil rights organizations, immigration assistance groups, as well as a diverse range of ethnic media.

According to the study, **38% of the women traveled to America to join family members; 22% in hopes of creating a better life for their children.** In citing their biggest challenges, the top two responses were helping their children achieve success and being able to hold their families together.

“It is striking that the poll data paralleled my mother’s own experience in bringing me and my brothers to the United States from Japan in the mid 1950s – her desire to build better

futures for us; her early low-paying, no benefits jobs; her determination to keep the family together as head-of-household,” said Hirono. “The importance of family to women immigrants is something we can all relate to and support as we discuss and debate immigration reform.”

The study and supplementary information can be accessed at the website:

<http://news.newamericamedia.org/>

New America Media is dedicated to bringing the voices of the marginalized - ethnic minorities, immigrants, young people, as well as the elderly - into the national discourse. The communities of the New America will then be better informed, better connected to one another, and better able to influence policy makers.

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