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NAPAWF Statement in Support of Goodwin Liu Nomination

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Washington, DC – In late February, President Obama nominated Goodwin Liu to the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Liu, currently a professor at the University of California – Berkeley’s Boalt Hall School of Law, would be the youngest judge on the court by 16 years, if confirmed by the Senate. He would also be the only Asian American among the 175 federal appellate judges to serve on any of the Courts of Appeals.

Professor Liu’s confirmation is especially important to the Asian Pacific American community because there are currently no Asian Pacific American judges among the approximately 175 active federal appellate court judges nationwide. Professor Liu is the second Asian Pacific American nominated to the federal appellate courts by President Obama, who earlier nominated Judge Denny Chin for the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. If confirmed, Professor Liu would be the only Asian Pacific American among the 25 active federal appellate court judges in the Ninth Circuit. That statistic is particularly troubling given that over 12% of the population of the Ninth Circuit is Asian Pacific American. Moreover, it has been over five years since there has been an active Asian Pacific American federal appellate court judge and only four Asian Pacific Americans have ever served as federal appellate court judges.

Professor Liu’s background is an inspiring story for all Asian Pacific Americans. He was born in Augusta, Georgia, to Taiwanese doctors recruited to work in the United States by American medical institutions seeking assistance in serving underserved areas. Living in Georgia and then Florida in the late 1960s and early to mid-1970s, Professor Liu did not learn to speak English until kindergarten because his parents worried that he and his brother would acquire an accent if they were taught at home.

Finally, Professor Liu has demonstrated his respect for the right to privacy and a woman’s right to choose in a prominent recent publication, *Keeping Faith with the Constitution*, which is in line with NAPAWF’s values and mission to advance and achieve reproductive justice for Asian Pacific Islander women and girls.

NAPAWF strongly supports this nomination and urge senators to give Prof. Liu a fair hearing. Based on his public service, and his long and illustrious record protecting civil rights, Goodwin Liu is highly qualified to serve on the Ninth Circuit.

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