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**Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Mourns Loss of its Member
California Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald**



Chicago, Illinois – April 23, 2007 - Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority’s worldwide network of 200,000 members is mourning the loss of its beloved member, Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald.

Rep. Millender-McDonald, who made her transition on April 22, 2007, enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a public servant representing the Southern California district that embraced Compton, Long Beach and parts of Los Angeles.

She was serving in her seventh term and widely acclaimed as one of Congress’ most popular and effective leaders.

In extending condolences, Alpha Kappa Alpha’s International President Barbara A. McKinzie hailed Millender-McDonald for her courage, commitment and for being a model of Alpha Kappa Alpha excellence.

Declared McKinzie, “Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority’s mission is to provide ‘service to all mankind’. Through her bold leadership, sensitivity to her constituents and her pioneering spirit, Juanita Millender-McDonald embodied the ideals of the Alpha Kappa Alpha woman. She gave generously to our Sorority in action and in deed and her loss will be felt Sororitywide. Our

sympathy goes out to her husband James, her children, grandchildren and to her constituents who benefited from her vision and dynamism.”

Added Alpha Kappa Alpha’s Far Western Regional Director, E. Lavonne Lewis: “Alpha Kappa Alpha has lost a sister, a public servant, and a champion for women’s rights, civil rights and racial justice. Her political savvy and distinguished record of public service in California and in this nation will be missed. I join the Sorority and our Far Western Region members as we mourn the loss of our dynamic ‘sister.’”

A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Rep. Millender-McDonald, was initiated into Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in 1991 in Los Angeles’ Alpha Gamma Omega graduate chapter. She steadfastly served her Sorority and her community.

Rep. Millender-McDonald worked for former Los Angeles mayor, Tom Bradley, prior to her election to the Carson City Council in 1990. Following her term on the Council, Millender-McDonald served in the California State Assembly before taking her seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1996.

Most recently, Rep. Millender-McDonald became the first African-American woman to hold the distinguished position of ranking member on the powerful committee on House Administration overseeing the operation of the House of Representatives, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institute, the National Zoo and all federal elections.

In addition, the Congresswoman was the first African-American woman to serve on the Carson City Council and the first to hold the position of Chairwoman for two powerful California State Assembly Committees (Insurance; and Revenue & Taxation) in her first term. She was the first African-American woman to give the national Democratic response to President Bush’s weekly radio address, and the first to be named Honorary Curator of the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, California.

Further, Rep. Millender-McDonald was the first Democratic Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues to lead the women on two groundbreaking meetings--the first with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to talk about the plight of women globally, and another with the Chairman of the New York Stock Exchange to develop strategies for increasing women’s investments and net worth.

Finally, Rep. Millender-McDonald also convened the first meeting between women members of Congress and Supreme Court Justices Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsberg to discuss issues of national importance to women. She led a delegation of 27 women to meet with former First Lady and New York State Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, taking the Families First Agenda to 35 states across the nation.

In recent years, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald worked on issues that particularly resonated with Alpha Kappa Alpha including election reform. As part of her international advocacy--and in concert with AKA’s stance--she opposed the genocide in Darfur.

In a move that attracted worldwide attention, and as an example of her bold leadership, in 1996 she accompanied then-CIA director John Deutch to Watts, California where he addressed residents who were concerned over allegations that profits from domestic sales of crack cocaine were being funneled to the CIA-backed Contras in Nicaragua

In addition to her Alpha Kappa Alpha affiliation, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald was a life member of the NAACP, served on the boards of the Harbor College Foundation and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Board, and on the Board of Trustees of Second Baptist Church, Los Angeles. She is Founder and Executive Director of the League of African American Women, an organization of 40 African American women's groups, and founder of the Young Advocates, a political leadership-training program for African Americans between the ages of 18-35.

Millender-McDonald earned a BS in Business Administration from the University of Redlands, a master's degree in Educational Administration from California State University - Los Angeles, and teaching and administration credentials from the California State University system.

Rep. Millender-McDonald leaves to mourn, her husband, James McDonald, Jr., five adult children and five grandchildren.