

April 27, 2020

Re: Join Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García as an Original Cosponsor of the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2020

Dear Member of Congress:

As organizations committed to achieving health equity, **we ask that you join Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García and sign on as an original co-sponsor of the Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA) of 2020.**

As the nation continues to grapple with the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), reports show that low-income communities of color are disproportionately impacted.¹ The pandemic has exposed long-standing racial and ethnic health disparities that we have sought to eliminate for decades, including:

- Black adults are 60% more likely than White adults to be diagnosed with diabetes.²
- Adults living with a disability are more likely to have cardiovascular (heart) disease.³
- Nearly six in 10 Latino adults are unable to communicate with their doctors due to language barriers.⁴
- Black women are three to four times more likely to experience a pregnancy-related death than White women.⁵
- Asian Americans comprise 60% of the U.S. population living with Hepatitis B.⁶

¹ Farmer, B. Long Standing Racial and Income Disparities Seen Creeping into COVID-19 Care. April 6, 2020. Kaiser Health News. Accessed April 14, 2020. <https://khn.org/news/covid-19-treatment-racial-income-health-disparities/>.

² Office of Minority Health. Diabetes and African Americans. December 2019. United States Department of Health and Human Services. Office of Minority Health. Policy and Data. Minority Population Profiles. Accessed April 14, 2020. <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=18>.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Persons with Disabilities as an Unrecognized Health Disparity Population. Reducing Health Disparities for People with Disabilities: A Public Health Challenge. 2015. CDC Disability and Health Prevention. Accessed April 14, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/features/unrecognizedpopulation.html>.

⁴ Associate Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Communication and Long-Term Care: Technology Use and Cultural Barriers Among Hispanics. July 2018. AP and NORC. Access April 14, 2020. <https://www.longtermcarepoll.org/project/communication-and-long-term-care-technology-use-and-cultural-barriers-among-hispanics/>.

⁵ National Partnership for Women and Families. Black Women's Maternal Health: A Multifaceted Approach to Addressing Persistent and Dire Health Disparities. April 2018. NPWF Issue Brief. Accessed April 14, 2020. <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/health-care/maternity/black-womens-maternal-health-issue-brief.pdf>.

⁶ Chen, M. and Julie Dang. Hepatitis B among Asian Americans: Prevalence, progress, and prospects for control. November 2015. World Journal of Gastroenterology. Accessed April 14, 2020. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4641114/>.

- 45% of undocumented adult immigrants are uninsured, compared to 8% of citizens.⁷
- American Indians and Alaska Natives continue to die at higher rates than other Americans in many categories, including cirrhosis, diabetes, suicide, and colorectal cancer.^{8,9}

That is why it is imperative that we work together to advance inclusive policies like HEAA to eliminate barriers to coverage, expand access to affordable health care and target investments that strengthen the health care system so that it works for all, especially for individuals living at the intersections, in order to eliminate health disparities.

HEAA is the only legislation that directly addresses the intersections of health disparities and immigration status, age, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, language, and socio-economic status. Since the 108th Congress, HEAA has provided policymakers with a comprehensive set of smart, strategic policy solutions designed to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities. Since then, the Congressional Tri-Caucus, comprised of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) has led the reintroduction of HEAA every Congress. For the 116th Congress, the CHC is the lead for the bill's introduction and Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García is the lead sponsor.

HEAA provides Congress with a comprehensive blueprint of policy solutions that are designed to respond to ongoing threats against the health and well-being of communities that experience health disparities, build on the coverage gains made under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and ensure access to quality, affordable health care for all.

As we collectively work to respond to today's unprecedented public health and economic crises, HEAA serves as a timely and strategic approach for Congress to champion. Since the 108th Congress, HEAA has received widespread support from more than 300 health advocacy organizations and more than 150 members of Congress. For these reasons, we ask that you join Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García and sign on as an original co-sponsor for HEAA this Congress.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to achieving health equity for all.

Sincerely,

⁷ Artiga, S. and Maria Diaz. Health Coverage and Care of Undocumented Immigrants. July 2019. Kaiser Family Foundation Disparities Policy. Issue Brief. Accessed April 14, 2020. <https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/health-coverage-and-care-of-undocumented-immigrants/>.

⁸ Indian Health Service. Indian Health Disparities. October 2019. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Accessed April 26, 2020. https://www.ihs.gov/sites/newsroom/themes/responsive2017/display_objects/documents/factsheets/Disparities.pdf.

⁹ American Cancer Society. Colorectal Cancer Facts & Figures 2020-2022. 2020. American Cancer Society. Accessed April 26, 2020. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures-2020-2022.pdf>.

National Organizations

UnidosUS
Community Catalyst
National Health Law Program
Coalition for Disability Health Equity
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
The AIDS Institute
Families USA
National Urban League
ACCESS
ADAP Advocacy Association
Advocates for Youth
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families
American Academy of HIV Medicine
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Federation of Teachers
American Holistic Nurses Credentialing Corporation
American Kidney Fund
American Muslim Health Professionals
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Society of Nephrology
American Society on Aging
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Association of Minority Health Profession Schools
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
AVAC
Black AIDS Institute
Breast Cancer Action
CAEAR Coalition
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
Cancer Support Community
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Reproductive Rights
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Access National Network (CANN)
Community Education Group
Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)

Drug Policy Alliance
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
ETR (Education, Training and Research)
Fijate Bien/MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights
First Focus Campaign for Children
Forward Together Action
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Health Equality
Global Liver Institute
Hep B United
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hepatitis C Association
Hepatitis Education Project
Human Impact Partners
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Japanese American Citizens League
Justice in Aging
Lakeshore Foundation
Latino Commission on AIDS
LatinosAgainstAlzheimer's Coalition
MomsRising
Muslim Caucus of America
NAACP
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NASTAD
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Social Workers
National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Education Association
National Harm Reduction Coalition
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
Oral Health Progress and Equity Network (OPEN)
People For the American Way
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Power to Decide
Prevention Access Campaign
Prevention Institute
Reproductive Health Access Project
Robert G Gish Consultants LLC
Society for Public Health Education
Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment (SOPHIA)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
The 6:52 Project Foundation, Inc.
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The Praxis Project
Treatment Action Group
Trust for America's Health
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Voices for Progress
Young Invincibles

State and Local Organizations

Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago
AIDS Alabama
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
AIDS Project of the East Bay
Alivio Medical Center
Any Positive Change Inc.
APLA Health
Asian Center - Southeast Michigan
Asian Health Coalition
Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA)
Atlanta Pride Committee
Bienestar Human Services
Boys & Girls Clubs of Portland Metropolitan
Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council
California Center For Rural Policy
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
Cambridge Health Alliance

Casa Familiar
Cascade AIDS Project
Center on Halsted
CHE Cook County
Chicano Federation of San Diego County
Christie's Place
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
COALITION FOR HUMANE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS (CHIRLA)
Coalition of Florida Farmworker Organizations
Coalition of Texas with Disabilities
Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition
Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy, & Research Organization (CLLARO)
Compass LGBTQ Community Organization
Cultiva La Salud
DC Fights Back
Desert AIDS Project
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
Disability Resource Center
Diversity Research and Consulting Group, Inc.
Divine Truth
East Bay Getting to Zero
Eastmont Community Center
El Centro de la Raza
El Centro de Servicios Sociales
El Centro Hispano, Inc.
El Centro, Inc.
Enlace Chicago
Equality California
Equality North Carolina
Esperanza Health Centers
EverThrive Illinois
Erie Family Health Centers
Face to Face
G III Associates
Gads Hill Center
GoodWorks: North Alabama Harm Reduction
Grace New Beginning Church
Harm Reduction Coalition of San Diego County
Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center
Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc.
Heartland Alliance
Hearts on a Wire
Hep B United Philadelphia
Hep Free Hawaii

Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington, D.C.
Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama
Hispanic Services Council
Hispanic Unity of Florida, Inc.
Hudson Pride Center
Ibero American Action League
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)
Illinois Migrant Council
Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living
IMPACT CIL
Impetus - Let's Get Started LLC
Indivisible Chicago Alliance
La Clinica de La Raza
La Clinica del Pueblo
La Maestra Family Clinic, Inc.
Lanai Community Health Center
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California
Legal Council for Health Justice
LGBT Center of Central PA
LGBT Community Center of Puerto Rico
LGBTQ Center OC
Linda Nilsen Consulting
Linguava Interpreters
LULAC-IL
Medical Organization for Latino Advancement
Mercy Housing and Human Development
Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee on Anti-Poverty of San Diego County, Inc.
Mexican American Unity Council, Inc.
Michigan League for Public Policy
Midwest Asian Health Association
Mujeres Latinas en Acción
National Association of Social Workers - Texas Chapter
Nevada Hispanic Nurses Association
New Life Bowls
NOELA Community Health Center
North Carolina AIDS Action Network
North Carolina Council of Churches
Northwest Family Services
Northwest Health Law Advocates
Ohio Asian American Pacific Islander Advisory Council
Orange County Chapter of National Association of Hispanic Nurses
PACE, Inc. Center for Independent living
Project Access NOW
Public Justice Center

Rockland County Pride Center
Sacramento LGBT Community Center
San Francisco Hepatitis C Task Force
San Ysidro Health
Sea Mar Community Health Centers
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Silver State Equality-Nevada
Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois
Tennessee Justice Center
The Diversity Center
The Montrose Center
The Pride Center at Equality Park
The Source LGBT+ Center
The Wall Las Memorias Project
Transgender Michigan
TruEvolution
UHCAN Ohio
Verner Center for Early Learning Early Head Start
Waves Ahead and SAGE Puerto Rico
Working Partnerships USA