

[DATE]

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Healthcare Task Force Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus
2330 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Healthcare Task Force Vice-Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus
1319 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Donna Christensen, M.D.
Health Braintrust Chair
Congressional Black Caucus
1510 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Barbara Lee
Healthcare Task Force Co-Chair
Congressional Asian Pacific American
Caucus
2267 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ami Bera, M.D.
Healthcare Task Force Co-Chair
Congressional Asian Pacific American
Caucus
1408 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Roybal-Allard, Representative Ruiz, M.D., Representative Christensen, M.D., Representative Lee, and Representative Bera, M.D.,

We write to thank you for your work and leadership to advance the health and well-being of communities of color in the United States and to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities. During the debate on health reform in the 111th Congress, the Congressional Tri-Caucus ensured that the voices of our communities were included in the Affordable Care Act (ACA). We fully support the provisions in this law that expand access to affordable health insurance coverage for those who are uninsured and underinsured, ensure quality in the delivery of care, advance research, and promote disease prevention in our communities. These are all important steps towards eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities and achieving health equity.

We are thankful for your continued leadership and commitment to developing legislation that builds on these advancements. We support the efforts of the Congressional Tri-Caucus, under the leadership of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Healthcare Task Force Chair Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard, to re-introduce the Health Equity and Accountability Act to the 113th Congress.

In the 112th Congress, Representative Barbara Lee introduced H.R. 2954, the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2011, which built upon the foundations of the Affordable Care Act to further eliminate health disparities for racial and ethnic minorities, and for the subpopulations that face additional barriers based on factors including, but not limited to, immigration status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and limited English proficiency by providing federal resources, policies, and infrastructure for health equity initiatives. H.R. 2954 established a principled, strategic, comprehensive vision for achieving health equity post-health reform, and has effectively complemented the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS)

historic health equity initiatives. For example, in August 2012, HHS announced the Reducing Cancer Among Women of Color App Challenge, an initiative to combat and prevent cancer among women of color, which reflects a key provision of H.R. 2954.

The Health Equity and Accountability Act continues to achieve broad support among health equity advocates, professional associations, and other groups working directly with communities of color. This Act provides a comprehensive roadmap to address the reality that communities of color disproportionately face chronic and infectious diseases and other healthcare-associated issues including costly emergency room visits, loss of productivity and functional ability, and unnecessary institutionalization and premature death due to substantial cultural, social, and economic barriers to obtaining quality health care. As organizations committed to reducing racial and ethnic health disparities and promoting health equity, we are ready to support your work in this endeavor.

The undersigned [NUMBER] community organizations, national advocacy groups, professional organizations and research institutions, many of whom have supported this legislation in the past, are ready to offer our expertise and collaboration to advance the Health Equity and Accountability Act in the 113th Congress.

Thank you again for your leadership on these issues.

Sincerely,

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