

The Health Equity and Accountability Act

BACKGROUND

The Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA) is a comprehensive and strategic legislative roadmap that aims to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities. HEAA is the only legislation that directly addresses the intersections of health inequalities and immigration status, age, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, language, and socio-economic status. Since 2007, HEAA has been introduced by the Congressional Tri-Caucus, comprised of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC). The CHC is leading the introduction of HEAA for the 116th Congress and Rep. Jesus “Chuy” Garcia is the lead sponsor on behalf of the CHC.

AN OVERVIEW OF ISSUES HEAA ADDRESSES

HEAA builds on the gains made under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and lays out a vision of additional investments Congress should make to respond to the policy threats against the health and well-being of underserved communities, address health disparities and ensure access to quality, affordable health care for all. Examples of issues HEAA addresses include:

- *Reducing racial health disparities*, including infant and maternal mortality rates.
- *Expanding mental and behavioral services* targeting low-income, communities of color.
- *Increasing federal funding for health care services* for people of color living with HIV/AIDS.
- *Improving health care access and quality for all*, including undocumented children and families.
- *Strengthening health data collection* to inform policies that eradicate racial health disparities.
- *Enhancing language access and culturally competent care* for limited English proficient (LEP) immigrants.
- *Addressing social determinants of health* to mitigate the effects of systemic poverty and discrimination.

Over 300 racial and health equity organizations, researchers, provider groups, and community-based organizations have contributed to the development of HEAA since its inception. Additionally, over 150 Members of Congress have co-sponsored HEAA over the past decade.

CONTACT

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