

May 29, 2020

Dear Senators,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to show our strong support for the Health Equity & Access under the Law (HEAL) for Immigrant Women & Families Act of 2020 (S. 3799), and invite you to join us in supporting the bill's first ever Senate introduction by Senator Cory Booker on May 20, 2020. Because of the spread of COVID-19, it's clearer now, more than ever, that we must close loopholes and eliminate existing policy barriers in our health care system so that everyone can have access to affordable, quality care. The HEAL for Immigrant Women and Families Act of 2020 accomplishes this by expanding access to healthcare services, including sexual, reproductive, and maternal health services, and removing unnecessary legal and policy restrictions on health insurance coverage for immigrant communities.

Every individual deserves to live a healthy life and to obtain affordable health care with dignity. This is true at all times, and even more so now, as we grapple with a global pandemic. Infectious disease outbreaks have a long history of harming society's most vulnerable, including immigrants, their families, and communities. Immigrants are also on the frontlines of fighting this public health emergency, putting their health and families at risk in order to keep our essential businesses and services open so that others can practice social distancing. The HEAL for Immigrant Women and Families Act of 2020 ensures all families, regardless of their immigration status, can access affordable coverage for which they are otherwise eligible and receive the health care they need.

Under the current law, many immigrants are unable to qualify for Medicaid or purchase health insurance from the health insurance marketplaces established by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As a result, immigrants are forced to navigate a complicated patchwork of care that often leaves them paying out-of-pocket for basic health care, particularly if a community health center or employer-sponsored health insurance is not available to them.

These onerous barriers disproportionately harm immigrant women. According to the Guttmacher Institute, one-third of noncitizen immigrant women ages 15-44 are uninsured.¹ For women in that group who are also low-income, that proportion jumps to nearly half.² Furthermore, nearly half of immigrant women are of reproductive age.³ Legal and policy barriers to affordable health insurance coverage exacerbate their risk of negative sexual, reproductive, and maternal health outcomes, with lasting health and economic consequences for immigrant women, their families, and society as a whole. These barriers also disproportionately impact LGBTQ immigrants, immigrants with disabilities, and immigrants of other marginalized identities who need the care and services provided by Medicaid and the ACA.

Anyone seeking medical help should never be turned down. No family or individual should be left without an option to gain access to the care they need. The HEAL Act specifically helps to

¹ *Immigrant women need health coverage, not legal barriers*, Guttmacher Inst. (Jan. 2020), https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/infographic_attachment/2020-insurance-immigrant-women.pdf.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

achieve this by: 1) restoring enrollment to full-benefit Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to all federally authorized immigrants who are otherwise eligible; 2) removing the unjustifiable exclusion of undocumented immigrants from accessing health insurance coverage on the ACA's health insurance marketplaces; 3) ensuring access to public and affordable health coverage for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals; and 4) reinstating Medicaid eligibility for COFA migrants.⁴

From threats to health care, nutrition, and affordable housing, to separating families at the border and mass deportation, the Trump administration has been relentless in attempting to strip away agency and dignity from immigrant families. The current pandemic has highlighted what we've always known about these cruel efforts: we put all of society at risk when we fail to ensure access to healthcare for all families. We must have common sense solutions that protect everyone at all times. Our workforce is healthier and our economy is stronger when more of us have health coverage. In light of this reality, we need bold legislation that expands access to the basic care that immigrant women and their families need and deserve.

For these reasons, we strongly support the HEAL for Immigrant Women & Families Act of 2020, and we invite you to join us in this effort and cosponsor this legislation.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

ACCESS

Advocates for Youth

AFIRE

African Bureau for Immigration and Social Affairs

AIDS United

ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal

Alianza Americas

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association of People with Disabilities

American Federation of Teachers

American Muslim Health Professionals

American Public Health Association

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Asian Americans Advancing Justice|AAJC

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO

Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations

Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health

⁴ COFA migrants are citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau, who were inadvertently barred from the Medicaid program by the 1996 welfare law. The Compact of Free Association (COFA), an international agreement between the US and these three Pacific Islands, originally allowed their citizens to receive federally funded healthcare coverage.

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
ASU (APIDA Sisterhood Uprising)
Athlete Ally
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Avodah
Aytzim: Ecological Judaism
Bayard Rustin Liberation Initiative
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Black Alliance for Just Immigration
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Reproductive Rights
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Health Fund
Church World Service
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Coalition on Human Needs
COFA-CLAN
Community Catalyst
Community Change Action
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Daily Kos
Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul USA
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Emgage Action
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
End Rape on Campus
Equality Labs
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)
Families Belong Together
Families USA
Farmworker Justice
First Focus Campaign for Children
For Brown Girls, Inc.
Forward Together
Guttmacher Institute
Health Law Advocates, Inc.
Healthy Teen Network
Heartland Alliance
Hispanic Federation
Hispanic Health Network

Human Rights Watch
Ibis Reproductive Health
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Immigration Hub
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Indivisible
Ipas
Irish International Immigrant Center
Japanese American Citizens League
Justice in Aging
Keshet
Laotian American National Alliance (LANA)
Latino Commission on AIDS
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Legal Voice
Medical Students for Choice
Men of Reform Judaism
MomsRising
MS Black Women's Roundtable
NAACP
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NASTAD
National Abortion Federation
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Coalition of Latinxs with Disabilities
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council on Independent Living
National Domestic Violence Hotline
National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)
National Education Association
National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
National Health Law Program
National Human Services Assembly
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH)

National Justice for Our Neighbors
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for New Americans
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Survivor Network
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Not Dead Yet
Nurses for Sexual and Reproductive Health
Oasis Legal Services
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Poder Latinx
Population Connection Action Fund
Positive Women's Network USA
Power to Decide
Prevention Institute
Provide
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need
Reconstructing Judaism
Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Reproductive Health Access Project
RESULTS
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
SPLC Action Fund
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
The Children's Partnership
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The National Equality Action Team
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
The Workers Circle
Transgender Law Center
Treatment Action Group (TAG)

Tru'ah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
U.S. People Living with HIV Caucus
UltraViolet
UnidosUS
Union for Reform Judaism
United We Dream
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Uri L'Tzedek
We Testify
West Fund
Women of Reform Judaism
Yemeni American Merchant Association
Young Invincibles
YWCA USA

State-based organizations

Alabama

Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama
Thrive Alabama

Arkansas

Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese
Marshallese Educational Initiative

Arizona

Arizona Jews 4 Justice
William E. Morris Institute for Justice (Arizona)

California

Asian Resources, Inc.
Bet Tzedek Legal Services
California Food Policy Advocates
California Immigrant Policy Center (CIPC)
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
California Primary Care Association
Community Clinic Consortium
Equality California
HAITIAN BRIDGE ALLIANCE
Orange County Jewish Coalition for Refugees
Orange County United Way
Women's Foundation of California

Colorado

Center for Health Progress
Colorado Association for School-Based Health Care

Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)
Colorado Organizations and Individuals Responding to HIV/AIDS (CORA)
Immigrant and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado
The Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger

Florida

Farmworker Association of Florida
Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy
Florida Policy Institute

Hawaii

Lanai Community Health Center

Illinois

AIDS Foundation of Chicago
Enlace Chicago
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
United African Organization

Indiana

Multicultural Efforts to End Sexual Assault (MESA)

Kentucky

Kentucky Equal Justice Center

Massachusetts

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC)
Cape Cod Coalition for Safe Communities
Greater Malden Asian American Community Coalition
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Rosie's Place
Tapestry Health Systems
Welcome Project Inc

Maryland

DC-MD Justice for Our Neighbors
Public Justice Center

Michigan

Michigan United

Minnesota

Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota

Missouri

St. Francis Community Services

Mississippi

MIRA-Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance

Mississippi Center for Justice

Mississippi Gulf Coast Black Nurses Rock

Mississippi Health Advocacy Program

Mississippi Human Services Coalition

Nebraska

Nebraska Appleseed

Nevada

Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada

Silver State Equality-Nevada

New Jersey

Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center

New Mexico

New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty

Young Women United

New York

African Services Committee

Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC

Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

East Harlem Health Outreach Partnership

New York Immigration Coalition

Raise

SAJ-Judaism that Stands for All

Worker Justice Center of New York

North Carolina

Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy

Equality North Carolina

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Micronesians Coalition

Oregon

Tivnu: Building Justice

Pennsylvania

Casa San Jose

South Carolina

SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center

Tennessee

Tennessee Justice Center

Texas

Easterseals Coalition Serving Texas
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas

Utah

Utahns Against Hunger

Virginia

Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy
Virginia Poverty Law Center

Washington

Asian Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington
Northwest Health Law Advocates
ODYSSEY WORLD INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SERVICES
SYL Foundation