



NLIRH Urges Congress to Ensure Affordable, Accessible & Quality Health Care for All Immigrant Women

The National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)—the only national organization working to ensure the fundamental human right to reproductive health and justice for Latinas—urges both the United States Senate and House of Representatives to pass a health reform bill that offers *affordable* coverage, adequate *access* and *quality* health care for all immigrant women. NLIRH strongly believes that affordable, accessible, quality health care is a basic human right regardless of immigrant status.

In order to assure that human right, NLIRH advocates for inclusion of the following policies in health care reform:

- ❁ **Ensure that Latina immigrants who do not have insurance coverage through their employers have affordable, equitable access to health care, regardless of immigrant status.**
 - Latina immigrants face significant financial barriers to accessing the basic reproductive health care they need.
 - 47% of non-citizens are uninsured as a result of the lack of employer-based health coverage and restrictions on public coverage¹.
- ❁ **Ensure that employer-based health care coverage is affordable and accessible to all working Latina immigrants, regardless of immigrant status.**
- ❁ **Expand access and increase funding for Community Health Centers (CHCs) and Title X clinics.**
 - Over 20% of Latinas receive reproductive health care services from Title X clinics and family planning programs and nearly 25% of Title X clinic clients are Latina².
 - Latinas have the highest uninsured rate, over 38%, of any racial and ethnic group.
 - CHCs and Title X clinics are an essential source of reproductive health and preventative services especially for low-income Latinas and immigrant women.
- ❁ **Eliminate barriers and waiting periods on public benefits for Latina immigrants.**
 - Eliminate the five-year bar on accessing public benefits for Latina immigrants and families.
 - Medicaid reduces financial barriers that exist to provide essential reproductive health care services for low-income women. The exclusion of Latina immigrants from Medicaid for the first five years of residency is a great injustice.
 - Ensure prenatal, postnatal and postpartum health care to all immigrant women regardless of immigration status.
- ❁ **Expand access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services for Latina immigrants.**
 - Support the development and maintenance of lay community health education models such as *Promotoras de Salud*.

¹ Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, “Five Basic Facts on Immigrants and Their Health Care,” March 2008.

² Fowler, CI, Gable, J, and Wang, J. *Family Planning Annual Report: 2006 National Summary*. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International (February 2008).