

June 1, 2012

Dear Senators Daniel K. Akaka and Daniel K. Inouye:

We write to thank you for introducing S. 2474, the Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA) of 2012 in the Senate on April 26, 2012. The Congressional Tri-Caucus (made up of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus) has long championed this bill and we support their efforts in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. We also want to thank you for your work and leadership on a host of issues important to the health and well-being of minority communities in the United States.

We recently celebrated the two year anniversary of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), our historic health reform law. Communities of color and underserved communities stand to benefit from a number of the provisions of the law including immediate relief for many minority-owned small businesses through the small business tax credit; improved access to health insurance for millions of individuals – particularly those with pre-existing conditions – through insurance market reforms and the creation of new health insurance exchanges in 2014; the transformation of our sick care system into a wellness system through enhanced community-level efforts to reduce chronic diseases and improve health among population groups experiencing the greatest burden of chronic disease; and, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) release of new draft standards for collecting and reporting on race, ethnicity, sex, primary language and disability status, as well as plans by HHS to begin collecting additional data on sexual orientation and gender identity.

In addition, the ACA put in place infrastructure to address disparities through the establishment of Offices of Minority Health in the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Furthermore, CMS has begun to pave the way to improving the quality and value of our health care system through the creation of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation and the Federal Coordinated Health Care Office.

The Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2012 recognizes that additional steps must be taken to specifically address health care disparities and provides additional tools necessary to address and eliminate health and health care disparities experienced by minority and underserved communities. The HEAA of 2012 focuses on ensuring that a full range of culturally and linguistically appropriate health care and public health services are available and accessible in every community, creates additional pipeline and training opportunities for minority-serving professional and allied health care workers, and incorporates strategies such as community-based prevention efforts to address a range of disease-specific, mental and behavioral health issues facing minority communities.

We also support the provisions in the HEAA that seek to further eliminate existing access barriers to affordable health insurance coverage, promote investments in innovative health care delivery methods and technologies, strengthen evidence-based and community-driven prevention and public health strategies, and advance research and data collection about the health needs and outcomes of our communities. These are all important steps towards eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities, and creating a sustainable health care system that can pave the road to health equity.

As organizations committed to reducing racial and ethnic health disparities, including the subpopulations within communities of color that face multiple barriers due to factors such as immigration status, age, disability, obesity, sexual orientation, gender identity and limited English proficiency, we thank you for co-sponsoring this important piece of legislation. The undersigned, many

of whom have supported this legislation in the past, are ready to offer our expertise and networks to work with you to advance health equity. Please contact Priscilla Huang ([phuang@apiahf.org](mailto:phuang@apiahf.org)) with any with any questions.

Sincerely,

A Brave New Day

ActionAIDS

ADAP Advocacy Association

Advocates for Youth

AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts

AIDS Community Research Initiative of America

AIDS Foundation of Chicago

AIDS Resource Center Ohio

AIDS United

Alliance for a Just Society

American Assn. for Marriage & Family Therapy

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

American Heart Association

American Kidney Fund

American Public Health Association

American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery

American Society of Bariatric Physicians

Amnesty International USA

Asian American Health Coalition of Greater Houston- HOPE Clinic

Asian American Justice Center, member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Asian Center - Southeast Michigan

Asian Law Alliance

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Asian Pacific American Legal Center, member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Asian Pacific Community in Action

Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)

Asian Services In Action

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations

Association of Black Cardiologists

Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU)

Association of Nurses in AIDS Care

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP)

Black Women for Wellness

Black Women's Health Imperative

California Latinas for Reproductive Justice

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
CANN - Community Access National Network  
Center for Immigrant Healthcare Justice  
Center for Independence of the Disabled  
Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.  
Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc.  
Center for Popular Democracy  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Children First for Oregon  
CHOW Project  
Citizens Alliance Pro LGBTTA Health of Puerto Rico  
Clinica Sierra Vista  
Collaborative Center for Justice, Inc.  
Colorado AIDS Project  
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights  
Commission on the Public's Health System  
Community Access National Network  
Community Catalyst  
Community Organizations in Action  
Connecticut Multicultural Health Partnership  
Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)  
Digestive Disease National Coalition  
Directors of Health Promotion and Education  
Disability Policy Consortium  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
Families USA  
Family Equality Council  
Florida Legal Services, Inc.  
Gay & Lesbian Medical Association  
Guam Communications Network  
Hawaii Department of Health  
Health Law Advocates of Louisiana  
HIV Prevention Justice Alliance (HIV PJA)  
Hmong National Development, Inc.  
Human Rights Campaign  
IAMMM  
Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition  
Institute of Social Medicine & Community Health  
Iraqi Community Center  
Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies  
Jones and Chao, P.C.  
Kalusugan Coalition, Inc.

Kathleen Diamond & Co  
Kentucky Youth Advocates  
Kokua Kalihi Valley  
La Fe Policy Research & Education Center  
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California  
Latino Commission on AIDS  
Lifelong AIDS Alliance  
Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform  
Maternal and Child Health Access  
Mental Health America  
MI LOLA  
Miami Health Equity Project  
MichUHCAN  
Mo Hepatitis C Alliance  
Morehouse School of Medicine  
Moveable Feast  
Movement is Life  
MQVN Community Development Corp.  
Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, University of Hawaii  
Nana's Wish  
National AHEC Organization  
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors  
National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association  
National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network  
National Cambodian American Health Initiative  
National Center for Health and the Aging  
National Center for Health in Public Housing  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for LGBT Health  
National Congress of American Indians  
National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians  
National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians (NCAPIP)  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund  
National Health Law Program  
National Hispanic Medical Association

National Immigration Law Center  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Latino AIDS Action Network (NLAAN)  
National Minority AIDS Council  
National Nursing Centers Consortium  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Senior Citizens Law Center  
National Urban League  
National Women's Law Center  
New Mexico Asian Family Center  
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty  
New Yorkers for Accessible Health Coverage  
NICOS Chinese Health Association  
NO/AIDS Task Force  
North American Management  
Obesity Action Coalition  
OCA  
Ohio AIDS Coalition  
Ohio Asian American Health Coalition  
Ohio Poverty Law Center  
Opaka, LLC  
Out of Many, One  
Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services, Inc.  
Papa Ola Lokahi (Native Hawaiian Health Board)  
Public Justice Center  
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need  
Richmond Area Multi-Services, Inc. (RAMS)  
Senior Moments  
Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)  
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)  
Society for Women's Health Research (SWHR)  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center  
Status C Unknown  
Strazz Fitness  
Summit Health Institute for Research and Education, Inc.  
The CHOW Project  
The Obesity Society  
Total Health Care  
Transgender Law Center  
Trust for America's Health

University of Washington  
Utah Health Policy Project  
Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association of New Orleans  
Vietnamese Student Association  
Virginia Organizing  
Voices for America's Children  
Washington Community Action Network  
Westchester Children's Association  
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families