

31th National Black Nurses' Day on Capitol Hill
Theme: "Addressing the Epidemic of Health Inequity: NBNA's Call to Action"

The Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEEA) of 2018

The National Black Nurses Association calls on the 116th Congress to support passage of the Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA), (*H.R. 5942 and S. 3660*) a broadly supported legislative initiative aimed at eliminating racial and ethnic disparities. These investments are critical to eliminating the longstanding disparities in health status and health outcomes among racial and ethnic minority populations and other vulnerable populations.

Background

- The H.R. 5942 The Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEEA) of 2018 builds on the progress made since enacting the Affordable Care Act and was introduced by Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) and the Congressional Caucus' (Hispanic, Black and Asian Pacific) on May 23, 1028. There are 71 co-sponsors as of 12/3/18.
- Senator Mazie K. Hirono (D-HI) introduced S.3660 the Senate version of the HEEA on November 27, 2018 and has nine co-sponsors as of 12/3/18.
- The proposed legislation includes multifaceted and comprehensive measures to ensure workforce diversity; access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care; remove removal of barriers to health care insurance coverage; improve the health outcomes of women children and families; ameliorate diseases and conditions that disproportionately affects communities of color (physical and mental); bolster efforts to address the social determinants of health; invest in health information technology; and improve accountability and evaluation of related efforts.
- The HEEA of 2018 broadly addresses the longstanding inequities including factors such as age; employment status; sexual orientation; socio-economic status; disability status; gender identity and expression; and language barriers among populations.
- Removal of cultural and socioeconomic barriers to obtaining quality health care is critical to realizing equitable health outcomes. Communities of color are disproportionately affected by these factors.

Recommendations to Legislators:

- NBNA strongly urges the 116th Congress to support the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2018 (H.R. 5942 and S.3660).
- NBNA supports a multifaceted and comprehensive approach to reducing health disparities and achieving health equity as outlined in this proposed legislation and request that Congress work to support efforts to improve and protect the health and wellbeing of all communities.

References

The Health Equity and Accountability Act

https://www.apiahf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/October2018_HEAA_Factsheet.pdf

Know Before You Go: Does your Congressional Representative or Senator support the proposed HEAA?

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr5942/text>