



The Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2026

The Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA) is a comprehensive legislative framework designed to eliminate racial and ethnic health inequities. HEAA addresses health inequities that intersect with race and ethnicity, as well as immigration status, age, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, language, and socio-economic status. It aims to increase access to health care for vulnerable communities across the entire spectrum of care by taking a comprehensive approach to health equity.

Since 2003, HEAA has been introduced by the Congressional Tri-Caucus, comprised of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). The CHC is leading the introduction of HEAA for the 119th Congress, and Senator Alex Padilla and Congressman Raul Ruiz are the lead sponsors.

At a time when access to health care is under increasing threat, including through recent federal policy changes and H.R. 1, which has already resulted in significant coverage losses that have disproportionately impacted low-income communities and communities of color, HEAA is more critical than ever. Rather than reducing access to care, HEAA will:

- o Expand access to culturally and linguistically appropriate care
- o Strengthening and diversifying the health care workforce
- o Removing cost, citizenship, and administrative barriers to coverage and care
- o Increasing federal support for Medicare, Medicaid, and public health systems
- o Establishing innovative models for maternal, child, mental, and behavioral health
- o Funding prevention programs for high-impact diseases that disproportionately affect marginalized populations
- o Modernizing data collection efforts and expanding telehealth access
- o Addressing the social determinants of health through investments in nutrition, environmental justice, and community-based supports so that health outcomes improve and disparities are systematically reduced.

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.

For questions about HEAA, please contact John Chambliss (John_Chambliss@padilla.senate.gov) or Thomas Greco (Thomas_Greco@padilla.senate.gov) with Senator Alex Padilla's office, Jamie Truax (Jamie.Truax@mail.house.gov) with Congressman Raul Ruiz's Office, or Rubi Flores with CHC (Rubi.Flores@mail.house.gov)