

The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 13, 2014

Dear Representative Lujan Grisham:

We are writing to express our organizational support for H.R. ____, the **Health Equity & Access under the Law (HEAL) for Immigrant Women & Families Act of 2014**.

Almost two decades ago, politicians began enacting harmful restrictions that have put affordable health coverage out of reach for many immigrants authorized to live and work in the United States. The HEAL Immigrant Women and Families Act would remove political interference so immigrants are able to access the health care their tax dollars support. Further, by restoring access to coverage and allowing immigrants to receive the health care—including the sexual, reproductive and maternal services—they need, this bill will create healthier communities and a stronger economy.

The HEAL Immigrant Women and Families Act restores access to Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for all lawfully present immigrants who are otherwise eligible, by eliminating the five-year bar on enrollment and the outdated, restrictive list of "qualified" immigrants, both established by the 1996 welfare law. Further, the bill specifically enables lawfully present young people (DREAMers) granted status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program to participate fully in the Affordable Care Act—by allowing them to buy coverage on the health exchanges, obtain subsidies designed to make coverage affordable, and access care through the Basic Health Program—and to enroll in Medicaid or CHIP if they are otherwise eligible.

Immigrants are profoundly affected by existing restrictions on their access to health care that are based solely on immigration status. Further, these restrictions particularly affect immigrant women: Although women's ability to be healthy is critical to the stability of their families and communities, immigrant women disproportionately lack health insurance coverage. As the backbones of their families, drivers of their families' integration into the community and decision-makers regarding their families' health care, immigrant women should have access to programs that advance their health and well-being, and that of their families.

Immigrants work hard, pay taxes, and contribute to our communities and the U.S. economy, and should be treated fairly by the health care systems to which they contribute as taxpayers. Denying access to health coverage does not eliminate the need for health care. Instead, prohibiting access to health coverage exacerbates the risk of negative health outcomes and perpetuates harmful disparities. The HEAL Immigrant Women and Families Act is a welcome step toward ensuring that immigrants are able to participate in the health care system they help support, and improving the health and economic opportunities of immigrants and their families, our communities, and society as a whole. We commend you for your leadership in bringing forth this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

National Organizations (105)

9to5

Abortion Care Network

Advocates for Youth

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families

The AIDS Institute

Alliance for a Just Society

American Association of Birth Centers

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Civil Liberties Union

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

American Medical Student Association

American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)

American Nurses Association

American Public Health Association

Anti-Defamation League

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Asian & Pacific Islander National Cancer Survivors Network

Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center

Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance

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

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP)

Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice

Black Women's Health Imperative

Breakthrough

The Center for APA Women

Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School

The Center for HIV Law & Policy

Center for Reproductive Rights

Center for Women Policy Studies

Center on Reproductive Rights and Justice at UC Berkeley School of Law

Choice USA

Civil Liberties & Public Policy Program at Hampshire College

Community Access National Network (CANN)

Community Action Partnership

Democratic Socialists of America

Families USA

Family Equality Council

Farmworker Justice

First Focus Campaign for Children

Forward Together

The Global Justice Institute

Guttmacher Institute

Hispanic Federation

HIV Prevention Justice Alliance

Hmong National Development, Inc.

Housing Works

Immigration Equality Action Fund

John Snow, Inc. (JSI)
Lamaze International
League of United Latin American Citizens
Medical Students for Choice
Methodist Federal for Social Action
MOH Republic of Armenia
MomsRising.org
National Abortion Federation
National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence
National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians (NCAPIP)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Health Law Program
National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC)
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Minority AIDS Council
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance
National Tongan American Society
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility of United Church of Christ
OCA–Asian Pacific American Advocates
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Project Inform
Raising Women's Voices for the Healthcare We Need
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Institute
Reproductive Health Access Project
Reproductive Health Technologies Project
Samoan National Nurses Association
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Sauti Yetu Center for African Women, Inc.
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
SocioEnergetics Foundation
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
U.S.–Mexico Foundation

Union for Reform Judaism
United for a Fair Economy
Uri L'Tzedek (Jewish Orthodox Social Justice)
We Belong Together
Women's Refugee Commission
YWCA USA

State and Local Organizations (78)

Arizona

Asian Pacific Community in Action
Border Action Network
Japanese American Citizens League, Arizona Chapter

California

ACCESS Women's Health Justice
ACT for Women and Girls
Asian Americans Advancing Justice—Los Angeles
Asian Law Alliance
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
California Pan Ethnic Health Network
California Partnership
California Primary Care Association
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California
MAIZ Movmiento de Accion Inspirando Servicio
National Council of Jewish Women—California
Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander Alliance
Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Religious Sisters of Charity

Colorado

Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)
Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence

Georgia

Cobb Immigrant Alliance
Georgia Rural Urban Summit
Latin American Association

Hawaii

Hep Free Hawaii

Illinois

AIDS Foundation of Chicago
Asian Health Coalition
Campaign for Better Health Care, Illinois
EverThrive Illinois
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
National Council of Jewish Women Illinois State Policy Advocacy Committee

Kentucky

Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Louisiana

Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

Maryland

Maryland United for Peace and Justice
Public Justice Center

Massachusetts

Health Care For All–Massachusetts
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)
MataHari

Michigan

South Asian American Voices for Impact (SAAVI)

Mississippi

Steps Coalition

Missouri

National Council of Jewish Women, St. Louis Section

New Jersey

Reformed Church of Highland Park, NJ

New Mexico

Equality New Mexico
Media Literacy Project
New Mexico Asian Family Center
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty
New Mexico Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
New Mexico Voices for Children
Southwest Women's Law Center
Strong Families New Mexico
YDI-Elev8 New Mexico
Young Women United

New York

African Services Committee
Community Service Center of Greater Williamsburg
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC)
Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
New York Legal Assistance Group
Worker Justice Center of NY

North Carolina

Hispanic Liaison of Chatham County

Ohio

Asian Services In Action
Church of Our Saviour/Iglesia de Nuestro Salvador Episcopal

Oregon

Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Cascade AIDS Project

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Women's Law Project

South Carolina

Lowcountry Immigration Coalition

Texas

P.E.A.C.E. Initiative
Refugio del Rio Grande

Virginia

Virginia Organizing

Washington

21 PROGRESS
The Ave Project
Economic Opportunity Institute
OneAmerica
Surge Northwest
Tacoma Community House
Washington Community Action Network