

**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 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for all lawfully present immigrants who are otherwise eligible, by eliminating the five-year bar on enrollment and the outdated, restrictive list of “qualified” immigrants, both established by the 1996 welfare law.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 (79)**

### **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**

Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc.  
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