

**NHMA recently hosted our 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference where over a hundred NHMA members visited Capitol Hill** to meet with members of the House of Representatives and Senate. We met with 13 different offices where we advocated for important NHMA priorities like expanding Medicaid to cover the Medicaid gap and improving opportunities for Hispanic students to enter into the medical profession pipelines. We also advocated for improving health equity and bringing down barriers for Hispanic to access care. Finally, we called for more work to be done to prevent serious health issues by making more efforts to bring down rates of obesity and smoking as well as combating climate change so that the negative effects of these issues doesn't lead to future health issues for the Hispanic community.

**The National Hispanic Medical Association celebrates Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's confirmation to the United States Supreme Court.** Judge Jackson was the first Black woman nominated to the high court and will be the first to serve on the bench. NHMA supported the nomination along with NALEO and the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda organizations because we believe in the importance of diversity in our Federal government to improve our society's future.

**President Biden released his FY23 budget and NHMA is happy to see increases to programs and departments as well as policies that we support to help better Hispanic health in this nation.** One policy that NHMA is very pleased to see the Administration announce is the elimination of Medicaid funding caps for Puerto Rico and other U.S. Territories while aligning their matching rate with States. The budget includes higher funding requests for the Department of Health and Human Services and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Despite the increases in funding requests, NHMA joined a letter to Congressional Appropriators calling for them to increase to at least \$9.8 billion for discretionary Health Resources and Services Administration programs in the FY 2023 to increase diversity in the health professions through HCOP, COEs, AHECs and Faculty Development and increase in services in underserved areas through the NHSC, Ryan White Clinics and Rural facilities.

**As the nation starts coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency measures to help the underserved get the needed support for healthcare are coming to an end, but NHMA supports Medicaid program continuation to help our communities.** While Congress is still working on another COVID assistance bill, NHMA is concerned about what will happen if nothing is done and programs come to end. To that end, we have come together with our partners at Partnership 4 Medicaid to write to both Congressional leaders and the CMS Administrator. We called for them to create a predictable, transparent and evidence-informed wind down of the enhanced federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) and continuous coverage provisions included in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) that provides sufficient guardrails to protect beneficiaries while also reflecting the trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to ensure that those who are benefitting from these provisions are not left without healthcare when the programs expires.

**NHMA called on Congress to reinstate and expand guaranteed emergency paid sick days and paid family and medical leave.** With our allies in the paid leave coalition, we wrote a letter to members of Congress to swiftly reinstate and expand guaranteed emergency paid sick days and paid family and medical leave. Emergency paid sick days and paid leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) helped flatten the curve in the beginning phase of the pandemic and as we continue heading in the right direction on COVID we cannot let these important measures be left aside should a new variant come along. NHMA has long supported the enactment of paid leave and continues to push for its inclusion in any future Build Back Better bills.

**As April is the start of National Minority Health Month, NHMA is proud to be a strong supporter of the Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA) of 2022.** NHMA has supported the passage of the HEAA since its beginning and we are happy to continue working with our partners in the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) as well as allied organizations. Congresswoman Robin Kelly will be formally introducing the legislation this month and we wrote to members of Congress to sign on as an original co-sponsor of HEAA. The more support we can generate for this important legislation the greater opportunity we have for it to be passed into law.

**This week, the President Biden signed an Executive Order at the White House celebration of the ACA Anniversary at which Dr. Rios attended, to continue the subsidies for lower cost insurance premiums that were to stop in December. The Biden-Harris Administration also proposed a rule to strengthen the ACA by fixing the “family glitch,” which would save hundreds of thousands of families hundreds of dollars a month.**

Under the ACA, people who do not have access to “affordable” health insurance through their jobs may qualify for a premium tax credit to purchase affordable, high-quality coverage on the ACA’s health insurance marketplaces. Current regulations define employer-based health insurance as “affordable” if the coverage solely for the employee, and not for family members, is affordable, making family members ineligible for a premium tax credit even though they need it to afford high-quality coverage through the Marketplace. For family members of an employee offered health coverage through an employer, the cost of that family coverage can sometimes be very expensive and make health insurance out of reach. The “family glitch” affects about 5 million people and has made it impossible for many families to use the premium tax credit to purchase an affordable, high-quality Marketplace plan.

**Finally, climate change continues to be a major factor in the health of many Hispanics. That is why NHMA has been working with the Climate Action Campaign to support and pass commonsense solutions to help combat climate change and bring climate justice to those affected in the Hispanic community.** As NHMA continues fighting with its partners, we signed onto comments in support EPA’s proposal to reaffirm its finding that it is appropriate and necessary to regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants from coal- and oil-fired power plant for EPA rulemaking. The need to regulate hazardous pollutants is extremely important in the fight for climate justice and change as many of the areas most affected by these pollutants are Hispanic communities and neighborhoods.