



NHMA Legislative Update – August 2023

The national office continues to work diligently to monitor federal, state, and local policy developments, including legislative and regulatory changes, to advocate initiatives representing the interests of our 50,000 licensed Hispanic physicians in the United States. We maintain weekly communication with strategic national partners to empower Hispanic physicians to be leaders who will help eliminate health disparities and improve the health of Hispanics in the United States, including Washington DC and Puerto Rico.

Announcements

On Wednesday, July 18, 2023, NHMA [hosted](#) our 2023 Congressional Briefing and Leadership Reception on Capitol Hill at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center focused on “Increasing the Latino Primary Care Workforce.” NHMA honored Secretary Xavier Becerra, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with the “NHMA Government Award of the Year” for his outstanding leadership and service to the Hispanic community.

Featured speakers included Rep. Raul Ruiz, MD (D-CA-25) who highlighted student support programs including counseling and mentoring to prepare students at Hispanic-serving institutions for health care occupations and challenged NHMA to continue working on policy input and efforts on increasing Latinos in medicine, HRSA Administrator Carole Johnson highlighted Biden Administration innovative workforce programs to foster new approaches in workforce development and training, Norma Poll-Hunter (AAMC) highlighted continued support for pathway and health professions school programs as necessary for workforce development, and Noel Candelaria (NEA), Commissioner on the President’s Advisory Commission on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics, shared the imperative to increase the number of Latinos in higher education.

On Thursday, July 27, the NHMA Washington DC Metro Chapter hosted a reception honoring the NHMA Hispanic Leadership Development Fellowship program participants. NHMA celebrated our public health fellows for completing our Hispanic Leadership Development Fellowship program. To learn more about the program and our 2022-2023 fellows, [click here](#).

NHMA has joined Vot-ER to celebrate Civic Health Month in August 2023. Together we’re improving civic health by increasing the number of engaged voters to expand representation in shaping health care policy. Join us Friday, August 25, 2023 from 12:00 PM-4:15 PM ET for a FREE Virtual Civic Health Conference where civic health champions will discuss capacity building for civic engagement. To learn alongside a powerhouse group of speakers, including our very own Dr. Ilan Shapiro from AltaMed Health Services, and more. Register [here](#).

Advocacy Letters, Comments & Statements

Medical Education Policy

Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA-21) [reintroduced](#) H.R. 4985, the *Expanding Medical Education Act*, which would authorize federal grants for medical school construction, expansion, and training in underserved regions that lack access to affordable, quality health care. NHMA supports this bill that could increase the number of Hispanic physicians in the U.S., by creating pathways to medical education in underserved areas, and expanding Hispanic representation at all levels of the healthcare industry.

NHMA sent a letter to Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Chair Bernie Sanders and Ranking Member Bill Cassidy urging federal funding investments in Hispanic-serving medical schools and other public and nonprofit health entities as the committee works to expand the number of minority doctors in the United States.

NHMA joined the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved and other public health organizations in sending a letter to Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Chair Bernie Sanders and Ranking Member Bill Cassidy in support of S.862, the *Restoring America's Health Care Workforce and Readiness Act*, a bipartisan bill led by Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Marco Rubio (R-FL), which would extend funding for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) through fiscal year (FY) 2026.

Chronic Disease Policy

NHMA sent a letter to Joint Economic Committee Chairman Martin Heinrich and Vice Chairman David Schweikert ahead of a hearing which aimed to explore the individual and shared economic impact of diabetes and diabetes-related health complications. We urge the committee to review risk factors for diabetes-related complications, especially the chronic disease of obesity which has an economic impact of approximately \$237 billion on health care costs in the U.S.

NHMA joined the Sierra Club, in sending a letter to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell to strongly oppose attempts to delay implementation of the Methane Emissions Reduction Program (MERP) as passed in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), or in future legislation. Delaying implementation of this critical program would harm the climate, impair public health, increase waste, and imperil economic benefits already being realized as a result of the program.

NHMA joined the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs in sending a letter to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with concerns regarding a June 20 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) vote requiring shared clinical decision-making (SCDM) for the use of the new Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccines for

adults aged 60 and older. We urge the CDC to expedite the evaluation of any additional data needed to reconsider an age-based recommendation.

NHMA joined the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs in sending a letter to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director, Dr. Mandy Cohen, welcoming her to the role, offering the opportunity to meet and share our insights on how to continue to serve older Americans and work to close the health equity gap that continues to persist when it comes to the prevention and treatment of disease.

NHMA supports a Congressional Resolution designating September 2023 as "National Cholesterol Education Month," and September 1, 2023, as "LDL-C Awareness Day." NHMA continues to highlight the urgent need for screening and treating of LDL-C to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease or events such as heart attacks or strokes.