



ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY THROUGH CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

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September 8, 2023

The Honorable Terri Sewell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1035 Longworth House Office  
Building Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cory Booker  
U.S. Senate  
717 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative Sewell and Senator Booker:

We, the undersigned, write to thank you for your introduction of the John Lewis Equality in Medicare and Medicaid Treatment Act (EMMT). We believe this legislation is a crucial step in Medicare payment reform, addressing the social determinants of health and, finally, a significant step in achieving health equity in our country.

As you know, the Affordable Care Act created the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to develop, test and implement new value-based payment models. The genesis of this work, and overall vision for payment reform have been supported by several administrations, seeking to both improve healthcare quality and lower health care costs. We believe advancing health equity in all stages of model design, operation, and evaluation is fundamental to reducing inequities and essential to the future of these programs.

Originally introduced by the late Congressman John Lewis, the EMMT Act stands as a testament to his commitment to the integrity and quality of medical care for the most vulnerable Medicare beneficiaries. It would require advancements in the development of CMMI payment models to improve care for people of color, women and people living in rural areas, and would enshrine equity in the CMMI statute alongside quality improvement and cost considerations. It would also advance CMMI's focus on behavioral health, maternal mortality and chronic health conditions of those eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare.

We are deeply grateful for your leadership in working to eliminate health disparities based on race, ethnicity, gender, and geography. We truly believe that the John Lewis EMMT Act will advance health and racial equity and improve the lives of countless Medicare and Medicaid

beneficiaries. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please don't hesitate to reach us at [bpatee@rootcausecoalition.org](mailto:bpatee@rootcausecoalition.org) or [tdorney@rootcausecoalition.org](mailto:tdorney@rootcausecoalition.org).



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Sincerely,

Aligning for Health  
American Nutrition Association  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Black Mental Health Village  
Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School  
CommonSpirit Health  
Community Care Cooperative  
Community ConneXor  
Community Servings  
Covering Kids & Families of Indiana  
CyncHealth  
Food For Thought  
Food Is Medicine Coalition  
Health Center Partners of Southern California  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
Healthy Alliance  
Houston Food Bank  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)  
MLPB  
Olive Tree Mental Health LLC  
Open Arms of Minnesota  
Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation  
Street Health DC  
The Cook's Nook