Equity Legislation Monitor

Updated as of 9/13/22

The Coalition champions the development and implementation of policies that address the social determinants of health, lower healthcare costs and improve health outcomes.

The Coalition’s Equity Legislation Monitor, (ELM), is a tool developed by our organization to identify and track relevant legislation on key equity and SDoH issues introduced in the 117th Congress.

This ELM was developed with input from the Coalition’s Board, Advocacy Committee and Staff to provide a succinct list of equity-focused bills that will have the broadest and most lasting impact in achieving health equity. This list will be continuously updated, making the ELM a go-to source for the most recent and pertinent legislation related to equity and SDoH issues.

TRCC will provide analysis of the bills featured in the ELM, along with its updated status and any related materials shared by Congressional offices to provide the full picture of all each piece of legislation.

The ELM focuses on seven priority areas: digital equity; diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice; environment and climate change; housing; maternal health; nutrition and food security; and payment models. These topics were chosen because they most align with TRCC’s Mission and 8-point-call-to-action, as well as priorities of our member organizations.

For further information about the ELM, please contact Tom Dorney at t.dorney@rootcausecoalition.org or Hannah Miller at h.miller@rootcausecoalition.org

Digital Equity

The COVID-19 pandemic has increasingly shifted many parts of personal and professional life online, calling further attention to issues of digital equity, which has emerged as a key priority for the Coalition. As broadband is regularly used for school, work and telehealth services, affordable high-speed internet is essential for healthcare access as well as the day-to-day functions of life. Yet, estimates show that more than 30 million Americans, the majority of whom live on Tribal lands or in other rural areas, do not have access to broadband infrastructure that delivers reliable service. The Coalition champions policies that work to close this digital divide, especially as the pandemic continues to affect life across the country.

Information and Resources

- Federal Communications Commission: ‘Eighth Broadband Progress Report’
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality database: “Poverty and Access to Internet, by County”
Achieving Health Equity Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

- Journal of Medical Internet Research article: “Digital Health Equity and COVID-19: The Innovation Curve Cannot Reinforce the Social Gradient of Health”
- NJP Digital Medicine journal article: “Digital inclusion as a social determinant of health”
- American Journal of Public Health article: “Broadband Internet Access Is a Social Determinant of Health!”
- Current Cardiovascular Risk Reports journal article: “Can you see my screen?” Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Telehealth”
- JAMA journal article: “Bridging the Digital Divide to Avoid Leaving the Most Vulnerable Behind”
- Brookings Institute research: “Using digital health to improve health outcomes and equity”
- American Hospital Association article: “Digital Is the Next Frontier of Health Equity”

**Broadband Justice Act of 2021**

HR 1904 - Rep. Jamaal Bowman (D-NY)

- Introduced on 3/16/21
- 34 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

**Description**

The bill would:

- Update utility allowance definitions in the Housing and Urban Development, Agriculture and Treasury Departments to include broadband as a subsidized utility, recognizing broadband as an essential 21st Century need
- Renovate American subsidized housing infrastructure by retrofitting units with the necessary wiring for high-quality broadband by providing operational funds
- Create a flexible grant program to support wiring buildings, assistance, and other resident support related to installation and utilization of broadband

**Status**

The bill remains under consideration by the Committees on Financial Services and Ways and Means

**Additional Information**

- Representative Bowman’s office press release: "Bowman, Cleaver Introduce Bill to Expand Affordable Broadband to 8 Million Households"
- National Low Housing Income Coalition memo: "Representatives Bowman and Cleaver Introduce Bill to Expand Affordable Broadband Access for Low-Income Tenants"
- The Hill article: "House Democrats introduce legislation to expand affordable broadband access"
- The Verge article: "Rep. Jamaal Bowman introduces new bill to lower broadband costs"
Computer and Internet Access Equity Act

HR 2201 - Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL)  
- Introduced 3/26/21  
- 2 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S 1023 - Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL)  
- Introduced 3/25/21  
- 1 Co-Sponsor as of 9/13/22

Description  
The bill would:  
- Provide tax credits to low-to-moderate income individuals for certain computer and education costs  
- Expand the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Lifeline program that subsidizes monthly broadband and telephone service for low-income households  
- Direct the FCC to provide grants to nonprofits and community-based organizations that offer internet safety training and educational programs

Bill Status  
The bills remain under consideration in the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology in the House and the Committee on Finance in the Senate.

Additional Resources  
- Chicago Sun Times Editorial from Senator Durbin: “A lesson from the pandemic: Every American household needs and deserves reliable internet service”  
- Weekly Citizen article: “Legislation Introduced to Provide Tech Access to Low-Income Students”

National Broadband Plan for the Future Act of 2021

HR 870 - Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA)  
- Introduced on 2/5/21  
- 8 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S 279 - Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA)  
- Introduced on 2/8/21  
- No Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

Description  
This bill would:  
- Work to achieve digital equity by requiring the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) provide to Congress an updated National Broadband Plan informed by a new report on accessibility and affordability during COVID-19  
- Require the FCC to develop and share strategies outlining how connectivity can be used to advance racial justice and socioeconomic equity in health care and education
Status
The bills remain under consideration by the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications and Technology and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Additional Information
- Federal Communications Commission (FCC): The original National Broadband Plan, released on 3/10/10
- FCC: “Telecom Act 25th Anniversary Video & Twitter Chat”
- The Hill article: “Markey urges bipartisanship in push to update broadband plan”
- Politico article: “25 years of the Telecom Act”
- Roll Call article: “One year in, broadband access and telehealth are two big winners under COVID-19”

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice
The Coalition believes that addressing systemic racism is foundational to achieving health equity and that a moral and just society depends on mutual respect for all individuals and a commitment to eliminating bias, racism, and prejudice. Research has shown that experiences with individual and structural racism have been linked to a wide range of negative mental and physical health outcomes. Racial and ethnic minority groups in the U.S. have lower life expectancy and experience higher rates of illness and chronic health conditions, including diabetes, hypertension, obesity, asthma, and heart disease, when compared to their white counterparts. The Coalition champions policies that work to achieve health equity for all by addressing the impact of racism and discrimination on the health of racial and ethnic minority populations.

Information and Resources
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention resource page: “Impact of Racism on our Nation’s Health”
- The Justice Collaborative report: “Racism is a Public Health Crisis. Here’s How to Respond”
- House Ways and Means Committee Staff Report: “Fact versus Fiction: Clinical Decision Support Tools and (Mis)Use of Race”
- House Ways and Means Committee Staff Report: “Left Out: Barriers to Health Equity for Rural and Underserved Communities”
- House Ways and Means Committee equity resource page
American Academy of Family Physicians blog: “We’ll Take Every Opportunity to Push for Real Health Equity”

Anti-Racism in Public Health Act of 2021

HR 666 - Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA)
- Introduced on 2/1/21
- 59 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S 162 - Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
- Introduced on 2/2/21
- 4 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

Description

The bill would:
- Establish a National Center for Anti-Racism at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to declare racism as a public health crisis. This Center would:
  - Conduct and share research on social determinants of health, the public health impacts of structural racism and the effectiveness of intervention strategies
  - Award grants and create at least three regional centers of excellence in anti-racism
  - Coordinate with other Centers in the CDC to ensure structural racism in considered in all programming initiated by the agency
- Establish a violence prevention program for law enforcement within the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the CDC. This program would:
  - Study and develop interventions for the public health impacts of police brutality and violence
  - Collect data and research on police violence and misconduct

Status

The bills remain under consideration in the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Additional Information
- Vox article: “Exclusive: Pressley, Warren, and Lee reintroduce bill to fight racism in public health”
- Boston.com article: “Ayanna Pressley, Elizabeth Warren renew efforts to pass Anti-Racism in Public Health bill”
- American Academy of Family Physicians letter: “Joint Letter of Support for Anti-Racism in Public Health Act”

Environment and Climate Change

As the threat of climate change continues to grow, its environmental consequences have exacerbated existing health disparities and created new public health challenges, including persistent air and water quality issues and increased frequency of extreme weather events. These events disproportionately
affect low-income communities and communities of color, who typically have less access to social, political, and economic power due to structural racism and other systemic issues. A 2021 report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found that Black and African American individuals are 40% more likely than non-Black individuals to currently live in areas with the highest projected increases in mortality rates due to climate-driven changes in extreme temperatures. TRCC champions policies that address these drastic inequities through climate mitigation and public health strategies to ensure a healthy, equitable and climate-resilient future for all Americans.

Resources and Information
- In May, TRCC shared a letter with the Department of Health and Human Services, expressing support for the Office of Climate Change and Health Equity and providing policy recommendations for addressing the health impacts of the ongoing climate crisis. The letter is available here
- American Public Health Association (APHA) report: “Climate Change, Health, and Equity: A Guide For Local Health Departments”
- APHA resource page: “Climate Change, Health and Equity”
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency report: “Climate Change And Social Vulnerability In The United States: A Focus on Six Impacts”
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention research page: “Climate Effects on Health”
- National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences research page: “Climate and Human Health Impacts”
- Climate Health and Equity Coalition letter: “Recommendations on Climate Change, Health and Equity for the Department of Health and Human Services”
- Health Affairs article: “Health Risks Due To Climate Change: Inequity In Causes And Consequences”
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation research page: “The Intersection of Health, Equity and Climate Change”

Legislation in this space is still being reviewed by TRCC staff for inclusion in the ELM

For recommendations or feedback, please contact Tom Dorney at tdorney@rootcausecoalition.org or Hannah Miller at hmiller@rootcausecoalition.org

Housing
The racial wealth gap and historically common housing practices such as redlining, segregation and gentrification are major ways that health disparities emerge and are sustained in the U.S. over time. Research has shown that those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity face substantially higher risk of physical and mental illness and have consistently higher health care expenditures due to higher rates of chronic disease and emergency treatment usage. TRCC champions policies and housing interventions that improve housing stability and health outcomes while decreasing healthcare costs and advancing health equity.
Resources and Information

- American Public Health Association (APHA) report: “Creating The Healthiest Nation: Health and Housing Equity”
- APHA and Kaiser Permanente report: “Housing Affordability and Quality: A Driver of Community Health”
- Urban Institute article: “The Connection between Housing, Health, and Racial Equity”
- Green and Healthy Homes Initiative report: “Achieving Health and Social Equity Through Housing”
- International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health article: “Investing in Public Health Infrastructure to Address the Complexities of Homelessness”
- Medical Care Journal article: “Does Housing Improve Health Care Utilization and Costs? A Longitudinal Analysis of Health Administrative Data Linked to a Cohort of Individuals With a History of Homelessness”
- The Lancet journal article: “Adverse childhood experiences and related outcomes among adults experiencing homelessness: a systematic review and meta-analysis”

Keeping Renters Safe Act of 2021

H.R. 5307 - Rep. Cori Bush (D-MO)
- Introduced on 9/21/21
- 56 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S. 2776 - Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
- Introduced on 9/21/21
- 5 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

Description
This bill would:
- Grant permanent authority to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to implement a residential eviction moratorium in the event of a public health crisis
- Direct HHS to implement an automatic national residential eviction moratorium in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that is automatic, applies to all residential eviction filings, hearings, judgments, and execution of judgments. The moratorium would remain in effect for at least 60 days following the conclusion of a public health emergency
- Allow for appropriate moratorium exceptions necessary to protect the health and safety of others.

Status
The bills are still under consideration by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Maternal Health
Maternal health is a priority for the Coalition, as the U.S. has a higher rate of maternal mortality than any other developed country. This crisis disproportionately affects people of color, as Black women are three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than white women in the U.S, with the CDC estimating that 60 percent of these deaths are preventable. TRCC is committed to addressing structural racism and the wide range of social determinants that contribute to these devastating disparities. We believe in the right to a healthy pregnancy for every American.

Resources and Information
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): “Maternal Morbidity and Mortality Data and Analysis Initiative”
- HHS issue brief: “Medicaid After Pregnancy: State-Level Implications of Extending Postpartum Coverage”
- White House: “A Proclamation on Black Maternal Health Week, 2021”
- American Heart Association journal article: “Call to Action: Maternal Health and Saving Mothers: A Policy Statement From the American Heart Association”
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) resource page: “Working Together to Reduce Black Maternal Mortality”
- CDC database: “Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance System”
- Health Affairs article: “Pathways To Equitable And Antiracist Maternal Mental Health Care: Insights From Black Women Stakeholders”
- The Urban Institute report: “Evidence-Informed and Community-Based Recommendations for Improving Black Maternal Health”
- Association of American Medical Colleges article: “Addressing maternal health inequities”
The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act

H.R. 959 - Representative Lauren Underwood (D-IL)
- Introduced on 2/10/21
- 187 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S. 346 - Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)
- Introduced on 2/22/21
- 31 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

Description
- This act is made up of 12 individual bills, each introduced by a member of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, all of which address a wide range of racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes, especially among Black women.
- This version of the Momnibus has expanded since its original introduction in 2020, and now includes legislation about the impacts of COVID-19 and climate change on maternal health.
- Click here to see an in-depth analysis of each of the bills that make up the Momnibus.

Status
- The bills are still under consideration in the House the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Transportation and Infrastructure, Education and Labor, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Veterans’ Affairs along with the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
- The version of the Build Back Better Act passed by the House in November 2021 contains every eligible provision of the Momnibus along with permanent yearlong postpartum Medicaid coverage. If this version was passed by the Senate, it would be the largest investment in American history to end racial and ethnic maternal health disparities and advance birth equity across the United States
- The Protecting Moms Who Served Act, was the first standalone bill included in the Momnibus to be signed into law on November 30, 2021. The Maternal Vaccination Act, another standalone bill in the Momnibus, was also passed by the House in December 2021

Additional Information
- In April, Representatives Lauren Underwood (D-IL), Alma Adams (D-NC) and Robin Kelly (D-IL) led 81 Members of Congress in a letter encouraging Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer to prioritize investments that address the U.S. maternal health crisis in the next reconciliation package. In the letter, the Members push for the inclusion of permanent yearlong postpartum Medicaid coverage in every state and Rep. Underwood’s Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and end racial and ethnic maternal health disparities.
- The Black Maternal Health Caucus: Momnibus resource page
- Sen. Booker’s office press release: "Booker, Underwood, Adams, Kelly, and Beatty Urge President Biden, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader Schumer to Include Critical Investments to Advance Maternal Health Equity in Final Build Back Better Package"

**Nutrition and Food Security**

Since our founding, the Coalition has advocated that hunger is a health issue, as myriad studies have repeatedly shown that nutrition-insecure households face higher incidences of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease and consistently have more emergency room visits, hospital admissions and total days in the hospital. Additionally, the cost of hunger to the healthcare industry alone is $53 billion annually, placing an ever-widening burden on our nation’s hospitals, health systems, federally qualified health centers, non-clinical community-based service organizations and citizens. TRCC champions policies that address the far-reaching human and financial costs of hunger and ensure nutrition security for every family.

**Resources and Information**

- TRCC hosted a listening session with our members and provided their feedback for the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health in a letter sent this July. The Conference will take place both in DC and virtually on September 28th, 2022. Programming is informed by 5 pillars including: improve food access and affordability; integrate nutrition and health; empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices; support physical activity for all; and enhance nutrition and food security research. To learn more about the event, click here.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) resource: Food access mapping tool
- USDA database: “Food Security and Nutrition Assistance Statistics”
- Congressional Research Service report: “Defining Low-Income, Low-Access Food Areas (Food Deserts)”
- The Urban Institute report: "How Far Did SNAP Benefits Fall Short of Covering the Cost of a Meal in 2020?"
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities report: “More Adequate SNAP Benefits Would Help Millions of Participants Better Afford Food”
- The American Prospect article: “A Boost in Food Stamps, but Hunger Remains”
- Journal of Patient-Centered Research article: “The Silence of Food Insecurity: Disconnections Between Primary Care and Community Organizations”
- Journal of Nutrition article: “Food Insecurity Is Associated with Chronic Disease among Low-Income NHANES Participants”
- American Journal of Managed Care article: “Food Insecurity, Healthcare Utilization, and High Cost: A Longitudinal Cohort Study”
- Health Services Research journal article: “Food insecurity, health care utilization, and health care expenditures”
• Association of American Medical Colleges article: “54 million people in America face food insecurity during the pandemic. It could have dire consequences for their health”

White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger and Health Bill

S. 3064 – Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)

- Introduced on 10/26/21
- 23 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

Description
- This bill would convene a second National White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger, and Health which would bring together experts and advocates to work collaboratively on policy and systemic changes needed to address food and nutrition insecurity, poverty, and systemic racism.
- The first such Conference occurred more than 50 years ago, culminating in the creation and expansion of programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program.

Status
The bills are still under consideration in the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Additional Information
- In March 2022, TRCC sent a sign-on letter to President Joe Biden, Health and Human Services Secretary, Xavier Becerra and Domestic Policy Council Director, Ambassador Susan Rice, asking for public support of a second White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health. The letter was signed by 134 member and non-member organizations.
- In May 2022, President Biden announced that for the first time in more than 50 years, the White House will host a Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health in D.C. The event will take place in September 2022, with an exact date being announced soon.
- The White House is working to put together a submission portal for ideas. You can click here to sign up for email updates about the conference, including the announcement for the submission portal.
- Representative McGovern’s office: One-pager and list of organizational endorsements
- Agri-Pulse op-ed from Rep. McGovern and TRCC Exec. Director Barbara Petee: “Americans are demanding action on the hunger crisis – Are lawmakers finally ready to listen?”
- Letter of support: Led by TRCC with 170 organizations signed-on
• Agri-Pulse article: “White House hunger conference expected in 2022”
• Civil Eats op-ed from Rep. McGovern and Rep. Jahana Hayes: “Hunger is a Political Decision. We Can Work to End It”
• The Hill article: “Time for a national strategy on food”
• Food Bank News article: “McGovern: Now is Time for National Conference on Hunger”
• CNN article: “This House Democrat is trying to end food insecurity in the United States”
• Video - Bill Introduction Press Conference

Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2021

HR 4077 - Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC)  
• Introduced on 6/23/21  
• 110 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S. 2192 – Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY)  
• Introduced on 6/23/21  
• 4 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

Description
This bill would:
• Change the formula that determines Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to better account for real costs and need, increasing the baseline of SNAP benefits by about 30 percent
• Eliminate time limits on benefits as well as the cap on the Excess Shelter Deduction in the SNAP formula to consider the cost of living when calculating benefits
• Permanently authorize a minimum standard medical deduction in areas with higher costs of living in every state for seniors and disabled individuals applying for benefits
• Eliminate time-limits on benefits for all Americans and would extend SNAP benefits to US territories, Puerto Rico, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands

Status
The bills are still under consideration in the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

Additional Information
• Rep. Adams’ office: One-Pager
• Coalition for Food Security and Hispanic Federation: Letter of Endorsement
• Sen. Gillibrand’s office press release: “Senator Gillibrand And Congresswoman Adams Push To Expand Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)”

Healthy Food Access for All Americans Act
HR 1313 - Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH)
- Introduced on 2/24/21
- 21 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S 203 - Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA)
- Introduced on 2/3/21
- 4 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

**Description**
This bill would:
- Establish a system of tax credits and grants to expand access to healthy foods in underserved communities. To be eligible, food providers who service low-access communities would first need to be certified as Special Access Food Providers (SAFPs) by the U.S. Treasury
- Provide tax credits and grants to SAFPs for the construction or renovation of grocery stores or food banks in food deserts, as well as operating costs for temporary access merchants, such as mobile markets and farmers markets

**Status**
The bills are still under consideration in the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations and the Senate Committee on Finance

**Additional Information**
- Sen. Warner’s office: One-Pager
- NBC affiliate article: “Ryan introduces legislation to eradicate food deserts”
- NBC affiliate article: “Sen. Warner introduces bill to help eliminate food deserts”

**Medical Nutrition Equity Act of 2021**

HR 3783 - Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA)
- Introduced on 6/8/21
- 96 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

S. 2013 - Sen. Robert Casey (D-PA)
- Introduced on 6/10/21
- 23 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

**Description**
This bill would:
- Require private insurance and public health programs, including Medicare, Medicaid, Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), to provide coverage for medically necessary nutrition when it is needed to prevent severe disability and death
• Address the disproportionate financial burden on individuals seeking treatment for digestive and inherited metabolic disorders, as lack of access to medically necessary food and medical nutrition leads to higher risk of malnutrition, surgery and repeated hospitalizations

Status
The bills are under consideration in the House Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce Subcommittees on Health and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Additional Information
• Representative McGovern’s office: Dear Colleague Letter on HR 3783
• Senator Casey’s office: Dear Colleague Letter on S. 2013
• Patients and Providers for Medical Nutrition Equity Coalition (PPMNE): Endorsement Letter
• PPMNE fact sheet: “The Medical Nutrition Equity Act: Providing a Cost-Effective Lifeline to Americans with Rare Digestive and Metabolic Diseases”
• PPMNE fact sheet: “Preliminary Cost Analysis Medical Nutrition Equity Act”

Medically Tailored Home-Delivered Meals Demonstration Pilot Act

HR 5370 - Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA)
• Introduced on 9/24/21
• 51 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

Description
This bill would:
• Establish a three-year Medicare pilot program to assess the effects of a covered hospital providing medically tailored home-delivered meals to qualified individuals
• Covered hospitals would provide at least two home-delivered meals per day to qualified individuals, as well as any dependents under the age of 18 who reside in their household for at least 12 weeks

Status
• The bill is still under consideration in the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Rules

Additional Information
• Food Is Medicine Coalition: One pager on the bill

Payment Models
The healthcare system’s ongoing shift from fee-for-service payments to value-based payments is an important step toward higher-quality healthcare but new models must incorporate social determinants to achieve health equity. Since years of research have shown a link between non-medical factors and poor health outcomes, new models must be equipped to address these factors that drive high healthcare costs and poor outcomes. This is particularly true among vulnerable populations, who often have higher rates of chronic disease and less access to health care services and coverage and are more likely to be dropped by providers under current incentive structures. As shared in our 8-point-call-to-action TRCC champions policies that include methods and processes to ensure payment to care providers and non-clinical community-based organizations to reduce costs, enhance health outcomes and improve efficiencies while addressing the social determinants of health and health inequities.

Resources and Information
- Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services press release: “CMS Issues New Roadmap for States to Address the Social Determinants of Health to Improve Outcomes, Lower Costs, Support State Value-Based Care Strategies”
- The American Academy of Family Physicians article: Advancing Health Equity: Principles to Address the Social Determinants of Health in Alternative Payment Models
- Center for Health Care Strategies report: “Leveraging Value-Based Payment Approaches to Promote Health Equity: Key Strategies for Health Care Payers”
- Health Affairs article: “The Case for ACOs: Why Payment Reform Remains Necessary”
- Health Affairs article: “Health Equity Should Be A Key Value In Value-Based Payment And Delivery Reform”
- Kaiser Family Foundation research: “Medicaid Authorities and Options to Address Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)”

John Lewis Equality in Medicare and Medicaid Act

**HR 7755 - Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL)**
- Introduced on 5/12/22
- 6 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

**S. 4067 - Sen. Robert Casey (D-MA)**
- Introduced on 4/7/22
- 2 Co-Sponsors as of 9/13/22

**Description**
This bill would:
- Require health equity advancements in the development of Medicare and Medicaid payment models from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI)
- Elevate health equity as a concern within the Innovation Center
- A one page summary on the bill prepared by TRCC staff is available here

**Status**
The bills remain under consideration in the House Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means Committees and the Senate Committee on Finance
Additional Information

- Sen. Booker's office press release: "Booker, Sewell Introduce Legislation to Advance Health Equity and Access to Care"
- Fierce Healthcare article: "New legislation calls on CMMI to create model based on health equity"
- TRCC circulated a sign-on letter to support Representative Sewell and Senator Booker regarding their new legislation, which was joined by 35 member and non-member organizations