Contact: Alec Loftus, aloftus@discoverASG.com, 617-430-6373

Driven by 85 health leaders of color, Summit brings together 2,000 to push health equity forward in MA

Leaders of health, business, labor, and philanthropic organizations commit to 'double down' on health equity, which has been under attack by the federal government

BOSTON -- Wednesday June 11, 2025 -- Led by more than 85 health executives of color, over 2,000 attendees joined Governor Maura Healey and state leaders today at JFK Library, and online, to commit Massachusetts to health equity goals, even in face of federal attacks.

The event was hosted by the Health Equity Compact (HEC), a non-profit organization dedicated to racial justice through better health policy and outcomes.

"With the work of health equity under attack, and the federal government planning to slash Medicaid, the safety net, and funding for critical life-saving research, it's time for Massachusetts to double-down on our commitment," **said Attorney Michael Curry, member of the National NAACP Board of Directors and a founding member of the Compact**. "I dare ask the question: When was America ever healthy? Centuries of racial biases, unjust social conditions and disparate treatment have left Black, Latino, and other diverse families sick and at higher risk of premature death."

According to research, Black mothers in the Commonwealth are twice as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes as white mothers. Latino children in Lawrence and Springfield still suffer disproportionately from preventable conditions like asthma and diabetes. And people living just two miles apart in Roxbury and the Back Bay of Boston face a staggering 23-year difference in life expectancies.

"Supporting health equity is a moral issue and an economic imperative," **said Manny Lopes, president and CEO of Fallon Health and HEC board member**. "When some communities have poor health outcomes, the whole system suffers. Sickness is expensive for all of us. Healthcare costs go up. Workforce productivity goes down. Family health and wealth decreases."

According to a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation report, the economic cost of racial health inequities in Massachusetts is $5.9 billion per-year, nearly doubling to $11.2 billion by 2050 without action. This economic burden is shouldered by taxpayers, businesses, and the healthcare sector itself.

"Massachusetts has the best health care system in the country, but we need to ensure that everyone in our state can access it. This is why my administration has made crucial investments to promote health equity across the state," **said Governor Maura Healey.** "Today, I feel encouraged by the work of the Health Equity Compact to bring more equity and affordability to all people across Massachusetts."

"The Senate has been proud to work in partnership with the Health Equity Compact to identify racial disparities in health care and work to tackle those disparities, especially at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic," **said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland)**. "While the comprehensive maternal health bill the Legislature passed last session was an important step to help ensure all expecting individuals regardless of background or economic status have access to the health services they need, we know there is still more work to be done. The Health Equity Summit provides a powerful opportunity to understand how Massachusetts can meet the moment regarding health care equity, particularly in the face of attacks from the federal government."

"The House is proud to work alongside the Health Equity Compact to advance health equity in Massachusetts," said **House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy)**. "Our belief that everyone, regardless of their race or background, should have access to quality and affordable health care resulted in the passage of five major health care bills last session. Working together, the Legislature eliminated copays on life-saving medications for chronic conditions, and passed

comprehensive maternal health and substance use disorder legislation. We look forward to working with the Compact to navigate the impact of President Trump's attack on affordable health care."

Following the Summit, Compact members will continue to push for broad alignment around health equity benchmarks and legislation this Legislative session.

Health Equity Compact Members:
(as of June 11, 2025)

- Al Campbell, President, Winchester Hospital
- Alejandro Esparza-Perez, CEO, Holyoke Health Center
- Allison Bryant, Associate Professor, Harvard Medical School and Senior Medical Director for Health Equity at MGB
- Amie Shei, President and CEO, The Health Foundation of Central MA
- Angelina Ramirez, CEO, Stavros Center for Independent Living
- Assaad Sayah, President and CEO, Cambridge Health Alliance
- Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner, Public Health and Executive Director, Boston Public Health Commission
- Cain Hayes, Former CEO, Point32Health
- Carlos Cappas, Chief Behavioral Health Officer, Lynn Community Health Center
- Charles Anderson, President & CEO, The Dimock Center
- Cheryl Clark, Executive Director and Senior Vice President, Institute for Health Equity Research
- Chris Reddick, Vice President, Health Equity, CSR & Philanthropy, Takeda
- Christopher Lathan, Chief Clinical Access and Equity Officer, Dana-Farber
- Claire Cooper, Vice President of Public Policy & Operations, The Partnership
- Claire-Cecile Pierre, Vice President of Clinical Impact - National Center for Clinical and Community Impact, Advocate Health
- Craig Andrade, Associate Dean of Practice and Director of the Activist Lab, BU School of Public Health
- Damian Archer, CEO, Outer Cape Health Services; Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs, Tufts University School of Medicine
- David Williams, Florence Sprague Norman and Laura Smart Norman Professor of Public Health, and Chair of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
- Deborah Enos, Professional Advisor and Board Member/Senior Executive
- Denise De Las Nueces, CMO, Boston Health Care for the Homeless
- Dharmendu Damany, President - North Region, Quest Diagnostics
- Dominique Lee, President and CEO, Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts
- Eduardo Haddad, President of Medical Staff and Chief of Medical Affairs, Lawrence General Hospital
- Elsie Taveras, Chief Community Health Equity Officer, Mass General Brigham; Executive Director at Kraft Center for Community Health at MGH Conrad Taff Professor, Harvard Medical School
- Filaine Deronnette, Founder and CEO, Good Works
- Frank Robinson, Partner, FDR & Associates
- Frederica Williams, President and CEO, Whittier Street Health Center
- Gary Chu, Vice President of Professional Affairs, New England College of Optometry; AAPI Commission
- Greg Wilmot, President and CEO, NeighborHealth

- Guale Valdez, CEO, Mattapan Community Health Center
- Guy Fish, CEO and President, Codman Square Health Center
- Helen Caulton-Harris, Commissioner of Springfield HHS, Springfield HHS
- Izzy Lopes, Vice President of Health Equity, Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association
- Javier Juarez, Director, Latino Equity Fund
- Jeffrey Sánchez, Senior Advisor, Sanchez Strategies
- Joan Y. Reede, President at Biomedical Science Careers Program Professor of Medicine, Dean of Diversity & Community Partnership, Director of Minority Faculty Development Program, and Director of Commonwealth Fund Mongan Fellowship in Minority Health Policy, Harvard Medical School
- Jordina Shanks, CEO, Fenway Health
- Jose de la Rosa, Co-founder and CEO, Guardian Healthcare
- Joseph Betancourt, President, Commonwealth Fund
- Juan Fernando Lopera, Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, Beth Israel Lahey Health
- Kedar Mate, President and CEO, Qualified Health
- Kenn Turner, Former President & CEO, Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
- Kevin Churchwell, President & CEO, Boston Children's Hospital
- Lauren Powell, Head of Health Equity; Research, Development & Medical, Biogen
- Lee Pelton, CEO and President, Boston Foundation
- Lissette Blondet, Director, Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers
- Lou Brady, CEO, Family Health Center of Worcester
- Lumas Joseph Helaire, Assistant Dean for Population Health Management and Health Equity Education, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
- Magnolia Contreras, Director of Community Benefits, Dana-Farber
- Makeeba McCreary, President, New Commonwealth Racial Equity and Social Justice Fund
- Mala M. Rafik, Partner, Rosenfeld & Rafik, P.C.
- Manny Lopes, President and CEO, Fallon Health
- Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, Chancellor, UMass Boston
- Marlon Washington, Area Vice President, 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East
- Marty Martinez, President and CEO, United Way Massachusetts Bay
- Mary Bassett , Director, FXB Center, Harvard School of Public Health
- Matilde (Mattie) Castiel, Commissioner for Health and Human Services, City of Worcester
- Michael Curry, President and CEO, Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers
- Michelle A. Williams, Joan and Julius Professor, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
- Monica Bharel, Clinical Lead Public Sector Health, Google
- Monica Vohra, Chief Medical Officer, DotHouse Health Center
- Myechia Minter-Jordan, CEO, AARP
- Nancy Norman, Physician Leader / Equity Champion / Changemaker
- Nate Horwitz-Willis, Founding Principal, Leliwop Global and Public Health Officer Major; US Air Force National Guard
- Neel Shah, Chief Medical Officer Maven Clinic
- Oami Amarasingham, Deputy Director, Massachusetts Public Health Association
- Oz Mondejar, Senior Business Executive
- Pablo Hernandez, Chief Medical Officer, Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center
- Paul Watanabe, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Institute for Asian American Studies, UMass Boston
- Paulo Pinto, Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers
- Rahsaan Hall, President and CEO, Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts

- Renee Crichlow, Chief Medical Officer, Codman Square Health Center; Vice Chair of Health Equity, Boston University Department of Family Medicine
- Renée Landers, Professor of Law, Suffolk Law University
- Ron Coursey, Executive Vice President, eMed
- Rosa Colon-Kolacko, President and Founder, Global Learning & Diversity Partners
- Sandhya Rao, Chief Medical Officer and Senior Vice President, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- Sandro Galea, Dean, WashU School of Public Health
- Shana Sullivan, Strategic Planning & Performance Director, UniCare
- Shari Nethersole, Vice President of Community Health, Boston Children's Hospital
- Sheila Och, Chief Public Policy Officer, Lowell Community Health Center
- Stan Mclaren, CEO, Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program
- Tania Barber, President and CEO, Caring Health Center
- Thea James, Vice President of Mission and Associate Chief Medical Officer, Boston Medical Center
- Tuyet Tran, Executive Director, Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts
- Valerie Stone, Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Department of Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital; Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School
- Vasundhra Sangar, Senior Director of Policy, MassBio

###