

About an Act to Advance Health Equity

(H.1250/S.799)

Lead Sponsors: Rep. Bud Williams & Rep. Judith Garcia and Sen. Pavel Payano & Sen. Liz Miranda
Hearing Date: September 20, 2023



What is this bill?

This bill aims to **promote health equity and transform the Massachusetts health system** by building equity and accountability into our government and all health-related businesses.

It seeks to create healthier outcomes for **all Massachusetts residents** while challenging the systemic barriers to health – like structural racism, health care affordability and insurance coverage.

Why is this bill needed?

Health care access and health outcomes are deeply unequal in the Commonwealth, especially for people of color.

Black and Latinx people were **2-3x** more likely to contract **COVID-19** and **3x** more likely to die from it.

COVID-19 Death Rates by Race



Black and Latinx | White

Health inequity among people of color costs Massachusetts:



5.9 billion each year*

*2023 Report from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation

What does this bill do?

Make our Government Equitable

- Create an Executive Office of Equity, led by the first-ever Secretary of Equity
- Ensure leaders of key state organizations (agencies, boards and commissions) represent those they serve

Improve Communities' Access and Quality of Care

- Provide full MassHealth coverage for all those eligible, regardless of immigration status
- Through "Health Equity Zones," empower our neighborhoods to lead the charge in building healthier communities
- Lower cost of medications for chronic conditions that unequally affect communities of color

Hold our Health System Accountable

- Require providers and insurance companies to use the same data to track health inequity, and share it publicly
- Create job opportunities for people of color in the health system, and ensure providers look like and understand their patients
- Reimburse patients for telehealth services for primary care visits and chronic disease management

For more information, contact hec@massleague.org.

About the Health Equity Compact: We are a coalition of over 80 leaders of color seeking structural solutions to make health care and health outcomes more equitable for all residents of the Commonwealth. We are executives and experts from health, business, philanthropic and labor organizations, including hospitals, health centers, insurance companies, academia, and public health. Our mission is to center racial justice in the health system and advance health equity in our communities through policy, budget and advocacy efforts.