

1 **COMMITTEE: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

2 **POLICY: ELIMINATING HEALTH DISPARITIES (RESOLUTION)**

3 **TYPE:**

4 The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the reform of our nation's health  
5 care system provides an opportunity for Congress and the Administration to work with  
6 NCSL, state policymakers, public, private community and faith-based institutions to  
7 develop strategies, policies and programs to reduce health disparities among racial,  
8 ethnic and cultural populations in the United States.

9 The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and its offices, institutes and  
10 centers including the Office of Minority Health, Centers for Disease Control, National  
11 Institute of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
12 and others should work with NCSL and state policymakers to: identify the social  
13 determinants of health which lead to disparities; adopt the National Standards for  
14 Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care (CLAS Standards) and;  
15 develop standards for the collection and reporting by federally funded health and health  
16 care programs of data on race, ethnicity, sex, primary language, disability status, those  
17 living in rural and frontier areas and other characteristics identified by the Secretary of  
18 Health and Human Services in order to analyze and monitor health disparity trends and  
19 develop promising practices and programs to eliminate them based on the data  
20 collected.

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22 NCSL believes reporting requirements are important, but should be limited to  
23 requirements where there is a reasonable expectation that the data will be used to  
24 analyze trends, improve patient outcomes, improve programs and eliminate health  
25 disparities. In addition, efforts must be made to impose data collection and reporting  
26 requirements in the least burdensome way possible.

27 These efforts should be supported by the President and Congress with possible  
28 increased funding and other supports to:

- 29
- Reduce health disparities;

- 30   ▪ Provide quality care and efficiencies;
- 31   ▪ Improve health outcomes;
- 32   ▪ Increase cost-effectiveness and save money; and
- 33   ▪ Meet legislative, organizational, and accreditation standards.

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35 NCSL urges the President and Congress to provide increased funding to the  
36 Department of Health and Human Services and relevant agencies, including the  
37 Centers for Disease Control; Office of Minority Health, the National Institutes of Health  
38 and etc. to: (1) implement the HHS Office of Minority Health's National Partnership for  
39 Action to End Health Disparities (NPA) efforts to mobilize a nationwide, comprehensive,  
40 community-driven, and sustained approach to combating health disparities and to move  
41 the nation toward achieving health equity; (2) expand funding and other resources to  
42 support the Regional Blueprints for Action that will align with the National Stakeholder  
43 Strategy to help guide action at the local, state, and regional levels; (3) augment  
44 outreach and other efforts targeting populations including racial and ethnic minorities at  
45 higher risk of chronic diseases and illnesses; and (4) develop additional evidence-based  
46 prevention and interventions targeting ethnic and racial minorities. NCSL urges the  
47 federal government to make every effort to include more women and minorities in  
48 clinical trials and other research initiatives to improve health care strategies and  
49 programs to eliminate disparities.

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51 Expires August 2015