



**Officers**

**Chair**  
Judith L. Lichtman  
National Partnership for  
Women and Families  
**Vice Chairs**  
Derrick Johnson  
NAACP  
Thomas A. Saenz  
Mexican American Legal  
Defense and Educational Fund  
**Secretary**  
Fatima Goss Graves  
National Women's Law Center  
**Treasurer**  
Lee A. Saunders  
American Federation of State,  
County and Municipal Employees

**Board of Directors**

Gloria L. Blackwell  
AAUW  
Ray Curry  
International Union, UAW  
Jocelyn Frye  
National Partnership for  
Women and Families  
Jonathan Greenblatt  
Anti-Defamation League  
Mary Kay Henry  
Service Employees International Union  
Damon Hewitt  
Lawyers' Committee for  
Civil Rights Under Law  
Janai Nelson  
NAACP Legal Defense and  
Educational Fund, Inc.  
David H. Inoue  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Benjamin Jealous  
People for the American Way  
Virginia Kase Solomon  
League of Women Voters of the  
United States  
Samer E. Khalaf  
American-Arab  
Anti-Discrimination Committee  
Joni Madison  
Human Rights Campaign  
Marc Morial  
National Urban League  
Janet Murguía  
UnidosUS  
Christian F. Nunes  
National Organization for Women  
Rabbi Jonah Pesner  
Religious Action Center  
of Reform Judaism  
Rebecca Pringle  
National Education Association  
Lisa Rice  
National Fair Housing Alliance  
Anthony Romero  
American Civil Liberties Union  
Liz Shuler  
AFL-CIO  
Fawn Sharp  
National Congress of American Indians  
Maria Town  
American Association of  
People with Disabilities  
Randi Weingarten  
American Federation of Teachers  
John C. Yang  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice |  
AAJC

**President and CEO**  
Maya Wiley

July 7, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, along with the NAACP, National Action Network, National Urban League, and UnidosUS, appreciate your leadership in working to secure an economic package to help reduce our country's economic and racial disparities and make health equity a reality for all communities.

As we have previously urged, any economic reconciliation legislation should close the Medicaid coverage gap, even temporarily, so that the more than 2.2 million adults, 60 percent of whom are people of color, living in states that have not adopted the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Medicaid expansion can finally access health care under the ACA. That is reason alone to ensure that a provision closing the coverage gap is part of forthcoming legislation. But now with the unconscionable U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, it is even more urgent to close the coverage gap. Many of the states with the most restrictive abortion laws also have failed to extend Medicaid to low-income adults. There are more than 800,000 women of reproductive age with income under 100 percent of poverty living in states that haven't expanded Medicaid, leaving them without access to comprehensive health coverage. Many of these people live in the South, a region where more than half of the country's Black population lives and which already ranks low on many maternal health outcome measures.

Access to health coverage is not a substitute for abortion access and closing the coverage gap will not address the lack of abortion in these states. But closing the coverage gap will help ensure that low-income people have a regular source of health care, making it more likely that they can obtain contraception if desired as well as important preconception care. Access to these services can improve the odds of a healthy pregnancy for those who become pregnant. Maternal mortality rates in the United States are already too high and have risen during the pandemic, particularly for Black and Hispanic women. There are many factors driving health disparities and no single solution, but one thing is clear: closing the Medicaid coverage gap is a critical step that Congress can take to address longstanding disparities in access to care.

July 7, 2022  
Page 2 of 2



We recognize the significant challenges you face in reaching an agreement on this legislation. Failing to close the coverage gap isn't a matter of missing an opportunity to improve a program; instead, it is about ending the current situation in which more than 2 million poor people, mostly people of color, lack any pathway to affordable coverage.

We appreciate your time and consideration of ways to reduce economic and racial disparities in health care as you work to come to an agreement on this legislation. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Peggy Ramin, policy counsel for health/poverty, at [ramin@civilrights.org](mailto:ramin@civilrights.org).

Sincerely,



Maya Wiley  
President and CEO  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

NAACP

National Action Network

National Urban League

UnidosUS