

CÁRDENAS HEART PACKAGE

HEALTH
EQUITY,
ACCESS,
RESOURCES,
TREATMENT



“Communities of color, like the ones in the San Fernando Valley, are being devastated by the pandemic. People of color are disproportionately dying and reporting higher confirmed cases of COVID-19 and historic levels of anxiety and depression due to COVID. We need targeted relief for our communities. While Congressional Democrats have tried to take care of all Americans, President Trump and Senate Republicans have repeatedly stood in the way and pushed communities of color to the back of the line. All while communities of color have shouldered front-line work throughout the pandemic so others can stay safe.

Now that Democrats are in the majority in both chambers of Congress and have an ally in the White House, we can address the massive inequities that have been made worse by the pandemic. That's why I introduced my Cárdenas HEART Package – to tackle these problems head-on with a whole-of-care approach to support all Americans, including communities of color. Everyone deserves access to healthcare regardless of race, economic status, or zip code. The greatness of a nation is not measured by the stock market or military size; it is measured by how it treats its people. All of its people.”

**- Congressman Tony
Cárdenas**



A young child with curly hair is shown in profile, looking down at a watercolor palette. The child's hands are visible, and they appear to be painting or mixing colors. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

CÁRDENAS HEART PACKAGE

Historically, communities of color are often not seen as a priority or left out of the conversation entirely during national emergencies. Unfortunately, this continues to be the case, even though COVID-19 is affecting – and killing – people of color at a disproportionately higher rate compared to white Americans.

The *Cárdenas HEART (Health Equity Access, Resources, and Treatment) Package*, is a comprehensive COVID-focused legislative package that addresses widening racial and ethnic health disparities. This \$1 billion package focuses on a broad range of issues to address the racial health inequities exacerbated by the pandemic and targets relief for vulnerable and underserved communities.

THE INEQUITIES

In the Summer of 2020, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a study highlighting the increase in reported mental health challenges related to the pandemic in communities of color. Overall and across demographics, symptoms of anxiety disorder and depressive disorder increased considerably in the United States during April-June of 2020, compared with the same period in 2019. The report stated that “the percentage of respondents who reported having seriously considered suicide in the 30 days before completing the survey (10.7%) was significantly higher among respondents aged 18–24 years (25.5%), minority racial/ethnic groups (Hispanic respondents [18.6%], non-Hispanic black respondents [15.1%]), self-reported unpaid caregivers for adults (30.7%), and essential workers (21.7%).”

BY THE NUMBERS

Latinos account for 39.7% of the Texas population but are **53%** of the state's COVID deaths.

Latinos represent 36.7% of California's population but account for **53%** of the state's COVID deaths.

Black people represent 13% of the U.S. population but account for **25%** of total COVID cases.

BY THE NUMBERS

95%

of Black-owned
businesses

91%

of Latino-owned
businesses

75%

of Asian-owned
businesses

**HAD VIRTUALLY NO
CHANCE OF RECEIVING A
PPP LOAN**

Legislative Solutions

Stronger Medicaid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Act

Summary: Expands the scope of emergency services available for individuals who don't meet Medicaid's citizenship requirements including vital services like testing, treatment, and vaccinations for COVID-19.

Strengthening Mental Health Supports for BIPOC Communities Act

Summary: Requires state plans to report to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) information related to services provided to address health inequities within Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and outcomes experienced, outreach to and the hiring of BIPOC providers from multiple disciplines of mental health services, and training to providers on culturally and linguistically responsive services.

COVID-19 Health Disparities Action Act

Summary: Authorizes various efforts to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and other populations that have been made vulnerable to the pandemic.

Task Force on Physician Shortages Act

Summary: Directs the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to create a task force to study physician shortages, as well as barriers for physicians who trained abroad and now reside and want to practice medicine in the U.S.

Legislative Solutions

Strengthening Behavioral Health Supports for Schools Act

Summary: Authorizes funding for SAMHSA to operate a technical assistance and training center to provide schools and school systems with behavioral health support and services for students during the pandemic and beyond.

Youth Suicide Prevention Act

Summary: Authorizes the Secretary of HHS to establish a grant program to promote comprehensive mental health and suicide prevention efforts in high schools.

Virtual Community Support Act

Summary: Strengthens community-based and peer support behavioral health services during and after the pandemic. Creates a new program at SAMHSA to provide training and development to increase the workforce, enable providers and peers to move their services virtually, and help identify and coordinate care for those who need access to multiple services.

Crisis Counseling Act

Summary: Automatically approves requests by any state, territory, and tribe for a Crisis Counseling and Training Program after it had been granted a Stafford Act declaration. The program is administered by FEMA and SAMHSA to assist communities in recovering from the effects of disasters through community-based outreach, psycho-educational services, and other mental health assistance and training activities. Removing these bureaucratic hurdles prevents delays in COVID-19 support for communities.

Legislative Solutions

Expanding Access to Emergency Meals Act

Summary: Amends the Stafford Act to explicitly allow individuals participating in SNAP and other United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition programs to also participate in feeding programs funded using FEMA Public Assistance funds.

CONGRESSMAN
TONY CÁRDENAS
STANDING UP FOR CALIFORNIA'S 29TH DISTRICT

CARDENAS.HOUSE.GOV

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