



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS
Michelle Lujan Grisham | Chairwoman
115TH CONGRESS

August 17, 2017

The Honorable Thomas E. Price, MD
Secretary of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Price:

We are alarmed by reports that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has not engaged key advocacy groups in the Latino Affordable Care Act Coalition in preparation for the start of the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) open enrollment period on November 1st. This coalition, composed of local and national organizations, has been instrumental in ensuring that millions of Hispanic families are able to navigate the health care system and enroll in health care plans.

Data from four open enrollment periods demonstrate that in-person, in-language, and culturally competent consumer outreach, education, and enrollment assistance is the most effective way to engage the Latino community, especially those new to our healthcare system. Preparation efforts and resources for Latino outreach are even more critical this upcoming open enrollment period, given the very limited timeframe people have to enroll.

The ACA has been instrumental in ensuring that Hispanic families, which have been historically underserved and have disproportionately higher uninsured rates, have access to health care. Thanks to the ACA, four million Latino adults and more than 600,000 Latino children have gained health coverage. Moreover, we have seen a 20-point decline in the number of uninsured Latinos, which is the largest drop of any ethnic group. However, one in six Latinos remain uninsured so more work needs to be done to reach these communities.

The ACA remains the law of the land. As the agency tasked with launching a successful 2018 enrollment period, we should work together to ensure that HHS provides resources, information and properly coordinates with community stakeholders so we maximize access to health care for all eligible Hispanics and Americans. We urge HHS to prioritize Latino outreach and enrollment efforts in the 2018 enrollment period, and request an urgent meeting with you to discuss how the CHC can better work with your agency to ensure that more Hispanic families have access to affordable, quality health coverage and care.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter. Please contact CHC Executive Director Alma Acosta at alma.acosta@mail.house.gov to confirm a meeting date and time.

Sincerely,

Michelle Lujan Grisham
CHC Chairwoman

Joaquin Castro
CHC First Vice Chair

Ruben Gallego
CHC Second Vice Chair

Pete Aguilar
CHC Whip

Adriano Espaillat
CHC Freshman Representative

Raul Ruiz
CHC Health Care and Mental Health
Task Force Chair