

The Piercing Urgency of Now. Federal and State Policy Recommendations to Address COVID-19 Health Inequities



Catherine Cortez Masto
U.S. Senator (D-NV)

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Agenda

- **Welcome & Housekeeping**
 - Lauren Rosenbaum, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Families USA
- **Key Findings & Recommendations from the Report: *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Federal and State Policy Recommendations to Address COVID-19 Health Inequities***
 - Amber Hewitt, PhD, Director of Health Equity, Families USA
- **Addressing COVID-19 Health Inequities**
 - Catherine Cortez Masto, U.S. Senator (D-NV)
- **COVID-19 Health Disparities through a Civil Rights Lens**
 - Clint Odom, JD, SVP for Policy and Advocacy & Executive Director, Washington Bureau, National Urban League



The Fierce Urgency of Now: Federal and State Policy Recommendations to Address COVID-19 Health Inequities

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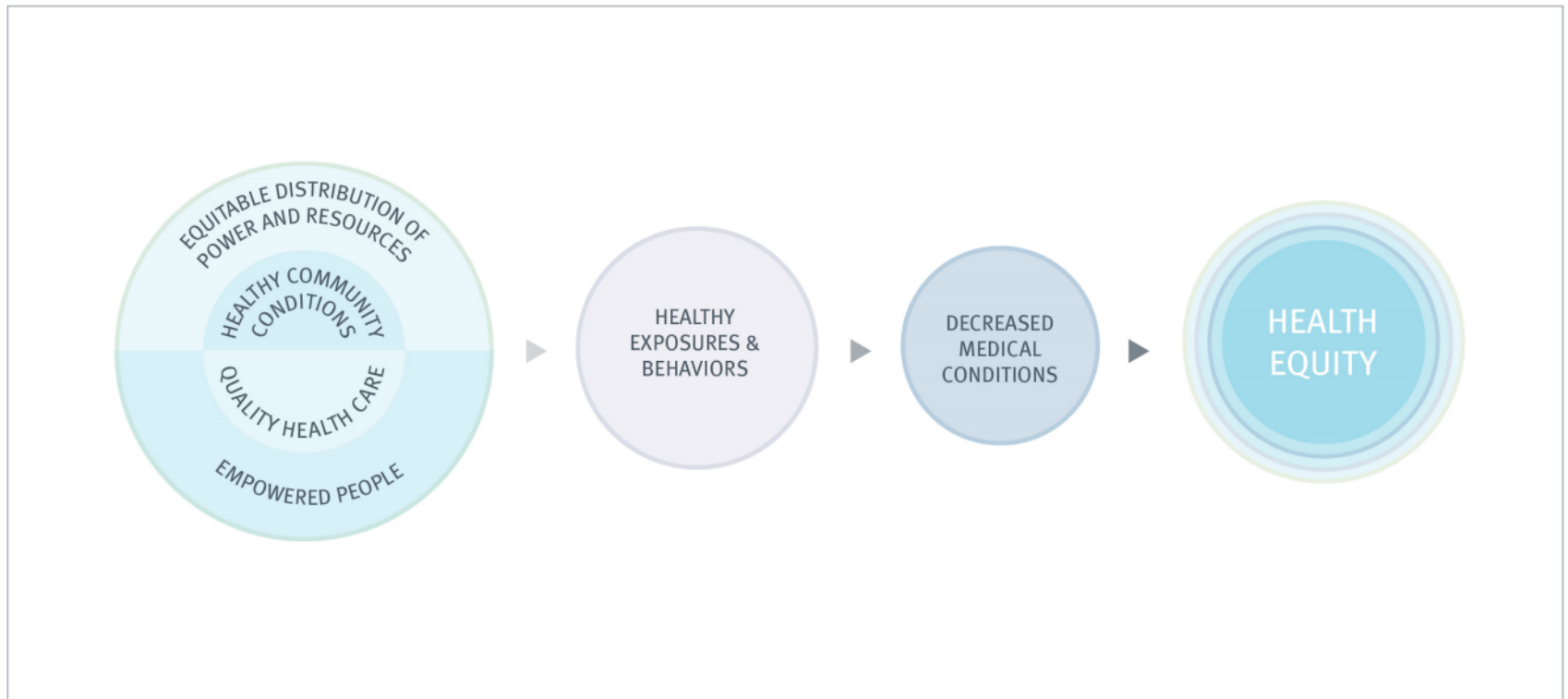


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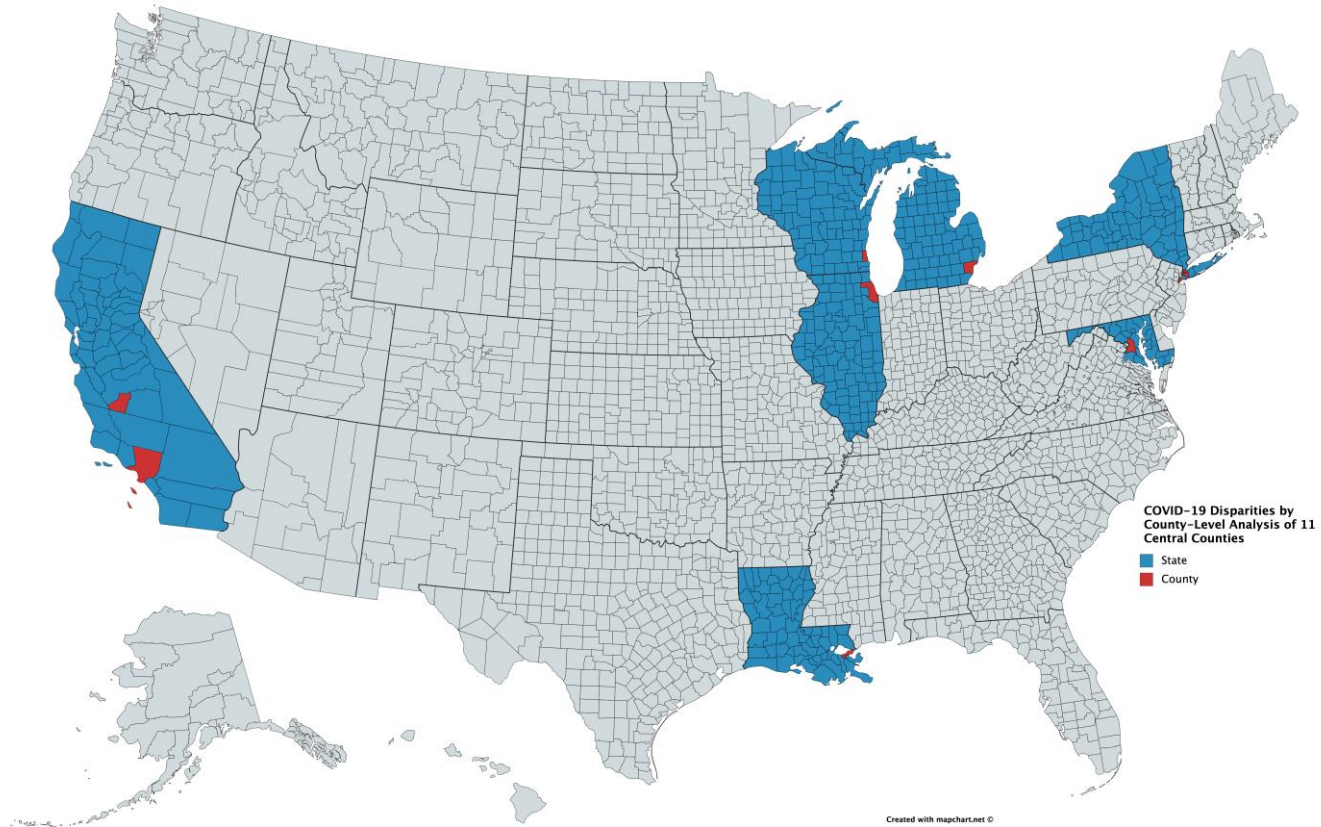


Health Equity Through a Systemic Lens

Figure 1. Prevention Institute's Trajectory of Health Equity

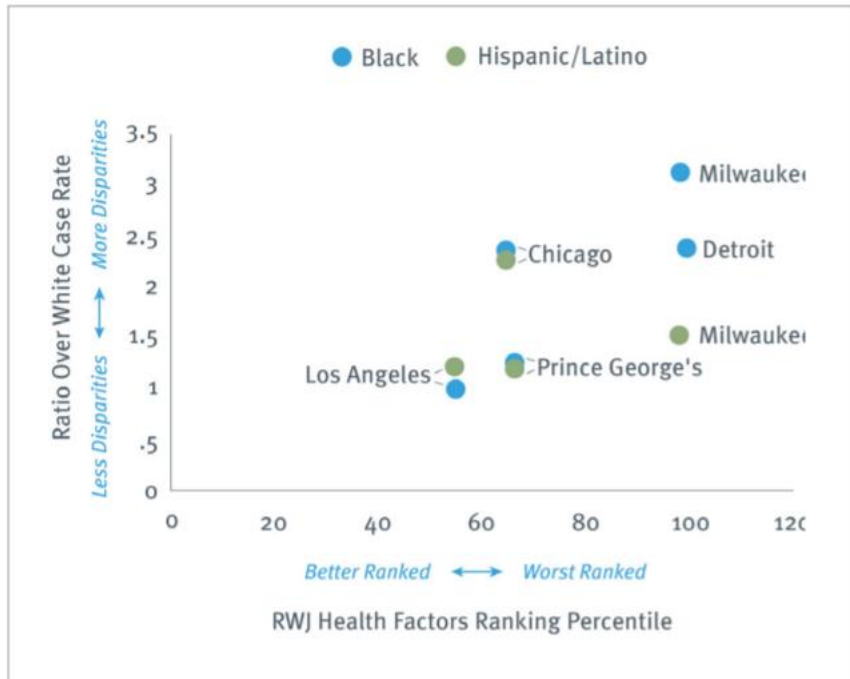


Analysis of 11 Counties

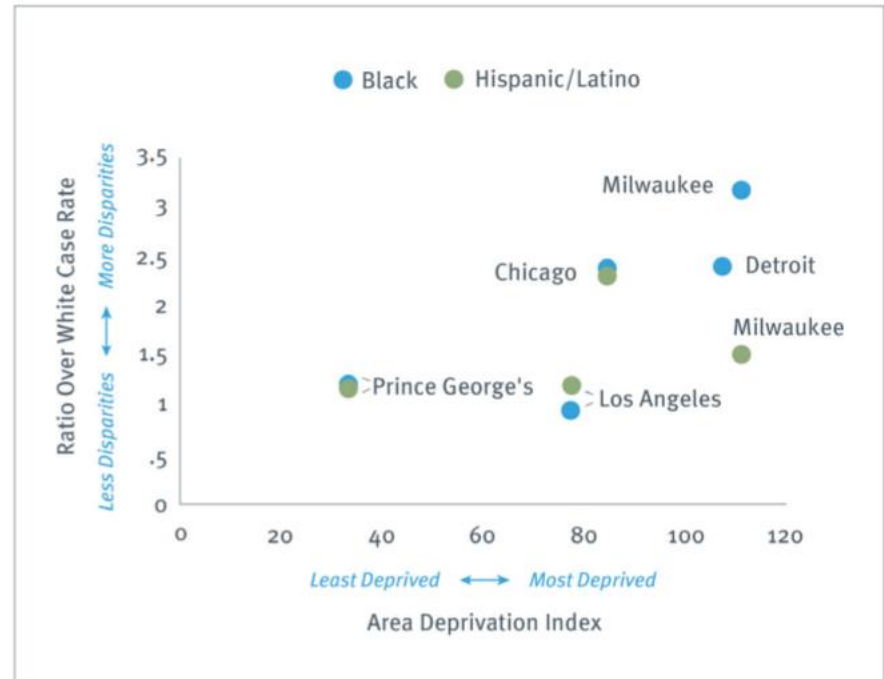


Analysis

COVID-19 Case Disparity Correlates with Health Factors



COVID-19 Case Disparity Correlates with Area Deprivation Index



The Fierce Urgency of Now

“In order to truly address the structural inequities that have produced and exacerbated the disparities we are witnessing, our country would need to do what Dr. King referred to as a “**radical revolution of values**...which will call us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Federal and State Health Equity Policy Recommendations

- **Priority 1:** Address the Social Determinants of Health
- **Priority 2:** Build Strong Financial Incentives In our Health Care System for Improved Health Equity
- **Priority 3:** Organize and build national public health capacity both to fight COVID-19 and to reduce the burden of chronic illness in marginalized communities
- **Priority 4:** Ensure equitable access to affordable health coverage
- **Priority 5:** Expand Access to COVID-19 Treatment for Marginalized Populations

Call to Action

- Health equity advocates have an opportunity and an obligation to **hold federal and state policymakers accountable** to communities that have historically been ignored and excluded.
- Urge your **senators to act now** and advance legislation that prioritizes health equity in the next COVID-19 package.



Catherine Cortez Masto

U.S. Senator (D-NV)

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Clint Odom, JD

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**National
Urban League**

@NatUrbanLeague



Who We Are

- Founded in 1910
- Network of 90 affiliates serving 300 communities across 36 states and D.C.
- **Mission:** social parity, economic self-reliance, power, and civil rights for African American and other underserved communities
- **Areas of economic empowerment:** education & job training, housing & community development, workforce development, entrepreneurship, health, and quality of life, and social justice



Black and Latino Communities are Disproportionately Impacted by COVID-19

Black infection rates are more than 100% of the population in 42 states with cases representing more than 300% of the population in eight states.

Latino infection rates are two times higher than the population in 30 states and four times higher in eight states.

Why?

Black people are

3.6X

more likely to die from COVID-19

Latino people are

2.5X

more likely to die from COVID-19

Sources:

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/06/16/race-gaps-in-covid-19-deaths-are-even-bigger-than-they-appear/>

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/05/30/865413079/what-do-coronavirus-racial-disparities-look-like-state-by-state>



Why are Communities of Color Disproportionately Impacted?

< 1 in 5

Black workers are able to work from home

1 in 6

Hispanic workers are able to work from home

Black people are **25%** more likely to have asthma, **20%** more likely to die of heart disease, and **60%** more likely to develop diabetes.

Households of color are **TWICE** as likely to experience hunger and live in food deserts.

Sources:

<https://www.lung.org/research/trends-in-lung-disease/asthma-trends-brief/current-demographics>

<https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=19#:~:text=In%202017%2C%20African%20Americans%20were,to%20non%2DHispanic%20white%20women>



How Does This Play Out on a Local Level?

Affiliate Efforts:

- COVID-19 testing sites
- Grocery/grocery card giveaways
- Virtual job fairs
- Virtual academic coaching
- Toiletry/PPE distribution
- Virtual town halls

Informs Federal Advocacy:

- Universal testing and treatment
- Infection, death, and recovery data collected and reported by race
- Culturally competent contact tracing
- Investment in access to food/health benefits
- Increased expansion of Medicare/Medicaid access

How Can We Take Action?

Areas of partnership and advocacy:

- Need for national collection and public reporting of racial disparities data
- Universal testing
- Culturally competent contact tracing strategies that reach communities of color most impacted
- Ability to get paid time off to get treated and prevent spread
- Treatment for all regardless of ability to pay

URGE THE SENATE TO PASS THE HEROES ACT!



Questions? Contact the Washington Bureau Health Team!



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Questions?



Tools to Support Action in Your State

- **Resources**
 - Report: [The Fierce Urgency of Now: Federal and State Policy Recommendations to Address Health Inequities in the Era of COVID-19](#)
 - Fact Sheet: [Health Equity Policy Priorities For COVID-19: What Congress Can Do Right Now](#)
 - Infographic: [Addressing Health Inequities in the Era of COVID-19](#)
 - Toolkit: [Comprehensive COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#)
 - Sign up for updates: <https://familiesusa.org/sign-up/>
- **Let us know how we can best support you in the post-webinar survey!**



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