

**36th National Black Nurses' Day on Capitol Hill**  
**Black Nurses: A Call for Transformative Health Equity Globally**

## **Eliminating Health Inequities: Diversifying the Nursing Workforce**

The National Black Nurses Association serves as a national nursing body to influence legislation and policies that support comprehensive efforts to mitigate the effects of health inequities for all Americans through changes that will racially and ethnically diversify the nursing workforce. The nation is increasingly sicker and more racially and ethnically diverse. To address these shifts in population, more nurses of historically marginalized communities are essential for improving access to care, building healthier communities, and achieving health equity for all Americans.

### **Background**

- Historically marginalized groups are projected to make up over **half** of the U.S. population by 2045.
- Health inequities adversely affect historically marginalized groups:
  - Life expectancy for Black people is **65.2** years, for White people it is **70.8** years.
  - Diabetes prevalence among populations is **16%** in Black Americans, **12%** in Hispanics people, and **11%** in White people.
  - Among populations with any mental illness, **39%** of Black people, and **36%** of Hispanic people are less likely to receive mental health care compared to **52%** of White people.
- Data reveal that diverse healthcare teams result in improved patient outcomes.
- In 2020, the nursing workforce was **80.6%** (White) compared to **6.7%** (Black).
- Recruitment of individuals from historically marginalized groups into nursing is a priority for diversifying the nursing workforce and achieving health equity, access, and improved care for our increasingly sick U.S. population.

### **Recommendations**

**NBNA calls on the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress to:**

- **Support H.R. 2411 *National Nursing Workforce Center Act of 2023*** - will support research, planning, and programs to address nursing shortages, nursing education, and other matters affecting the nursing workforce.
- **Support H.R. 2713 (ICAN) *Improving Care and Access to Nurses Act*** - will improve access to APRNs for Medicare Medicaid patients, increasing patient access to high-quality healthcare.
- **Support H.R. 3548: *Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act*** - will authorize \$995 million in grants and other funding to support research, improve the pathways of culturally competent providers, build outreach programs that reduce stigma, and develop a training program for providers to effectively manage disparities.
- **Support for Senate Bill 3233: *Preventing Diabetes in Medicare Act of 2023***, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the occurrence of diabetes in Medicare beneficiaries by extending coverage under Medicare for medical nutrition therapy services to such beneficiaries with pre-diabetes or with risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes.

## References

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