

Dr. Elena Rios met with several advocacy partners in December to follow up on planning for 2024 – Centene, United Health Foundation, United Health Group, AMA Center for Health Equity, PhRMA, Pfizer, as well as with the members of the NHHF Corporate Advisory Board who are government affairs leaders. Dr. Rios has prioritized her time with advocacy with the Federal government as well as the corporate sector to provide a unique voice for Hispanic physicians who care for the Hispanic community across the nation. **We are searching for a new Government Affairs Manager ---with Capitol Hill experience and a strong interest in Health Policy that impacts on Latinos. If interested send your resume and personal statement to Jobs@nhmamd.org**

Highlights on Legislative Work over the past month:

First NHMA Congressional Lunch Briefing for the year – on Obesity and Cancer and Latino Health to be held in mid-February (Capitol Hill, date TBD). Nhmamd.org to announce details this month.

NHMA and NHHF Capitol Hill Visits and White House Briefing, April 12, 2024 – if interested, register for the NHMA and NHHF 30th Anniversary Summit and Gala at nhmamd.org Note that space is limited.

Nominations of Hispanic physicians and others to Federal leadership positions:

NHMA's Foundation now has its MOU in place with HHS and continues to work with the US Department of Health and Human Services in advancing names from our networks to Commissions and Career positions. NHMA continues to work with the White House submitting names for political appointments. **If interested send your name and resume and position/commission of interest to nhhf@nhmafoundation.org**

Increased education needed for our patients about the resumption of annual eligibility renewals for Medicaid and CHIP - the single largest health coverage transition event since the first enrollments under the ACA. Since April 2023, states have resumed their eligibility renewal processes. NHMA has joined healthcare leaders in collaborating with CMS, states, and a coalition of stakeholders to keep Americans connected to health care coverage.

The National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA) submitted comments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid to improve medical care delivery to Hispanics and other underserved from hospitals and physicians. NHMA submitted comments on the expansion of the health equity-related Global Malnutrition Composite Score (GMCS) quality measure to all adults 18 years and older which was part of the 2023 Measures Under Consideration (MUC) list. We urged CMS to include the expanded GMCS in a FY 2024 Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program.

NHMA signed a letter urging Congress to finish the FY24 appropriations process with a bipartisan Senate funding framework as a starting point. Along with 1,098 other organizations—representing the full breadth of diverse programs that support all of America, every day- we are extremely alarmed by the possibility for very deep cuts to all of non-defense programs (often referred to as non-defense discretionary appropriations or simply “NDD”) for fiscal year 24 (FY24) if a full-year continuing resolution were to pass. Such cuts would be disastrous for the capacity of the federal government to serve the public, assist those in need, fuel innovation, and address national and global threats. Examples include investments in: scientific and medical research; medical care for veterans; environmental protections; home energy assistance; assistance with housing and child care for low-income families; rural development; K-12 education and skills training; nutrition assistance for young children, families, and older people; financial aid for college students; infrastructure investments in things like transportation choices, sewage treatment, safe drinking water, flood control and navigation improvements; diplomacy, humanitarian aid and development; services for victims of gender-based violence; courts and reentry programs; assistance for small businesses; public safety and other programs for older people; public health; and many more.

This month, NHMA supported the letter with the March of Dimes, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs, and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, asking congressional leaders to consider including the PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2023 and the Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act of 2023 in a final FY 2024 budget or as part of any other must pass legislative package. Both of these bills would greatly help address this crisis with a focus on increasing access to quality and equitable health care, supporting healthy moms and babies, and improving research and surveillance.

Last month NHMA voiced its opposition to the Biden Administration for announcing it was delaying its long-pending rules to prohibit the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars, which are targeted by the tobacco industry towards the Black and Hispanic communities.