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AN OPEN LETTER ON HEALTH DISPARITIES TO PRESIDENT BIDEN, VICE PRESIDENT HARRIS, AND MEMBERS OF YOUR NATIONAL HEALTH CARE TEAM

Dear President Biden, Vice President Harris,
and Members of Your National Health Care Team:

It is with great hope that we welcome you to the White House.

As Black female CEOs of some of the nation's leading health care organizations, we share your priority to get the pandemic under control through the safe, free, and equitable distribution of vaccines. COVID-19 continues to serve as a stark reminder of the racial disparities that exist in our healthcare system, especially for Black Americans who have died of the virus at a rate of more than twice that of White Americans.

In addition to the devastation from COVID, the Black community continues to experience health care disparities across all generations, from birth throughout the lifespan. We constantly see the impact of these inequities through the work of our organizations in responding to the health care needs of Black children and adults with disabilities; Black mothers and babies; and Black women, men and children struggling with chronic illnesses including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.

We applaud your commitment to improve and expand the Affordable Care Act and to protect Medicaid so that all Americans, regardless of age or color, have access to quality, affordable health care with intervention and prevention programs to address conditions that disproportionately affect the Black community. These actions promise to change the trajectory for communities of color in achieving social determinants of health which a recent scientific review revealed are shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources, and are mostly responsible for health inequities.

The racial divide in health care is the result of 400 years of policy, legislation, laws, and infrastructure that continues to disenfranchise Black Americans. Undoing these inequalities has been a struggle throughout our nation's history, but we must wade through the racism built into the system as we try to right these wrongs.

We urge you to prioritize solutions to remedy these persistent health care inequities within the Black community that have only worsened during the pandemic. It is imperative that we ensure that all Americans have equal access to resources to enjoy optimal health and well-being in a just society.

We welcome the opportunity to work with you to further the vision of a more United States.

We cannot do this alone.

Your presence brings us hope for long overdue change.

Sincerely,



Tracey D. Brown

Tracey D. Brown
American Diabetes
Association®
Chief Executive Officer



Linda Goler Blount

Linda Goler Blount, MPH
Black Women's
Health Imperative
President and CEO



Angela F. Williams

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