



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 21, 2023

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California Black Health Network Teams with Assemblymember Akilah Weber and the CLBC to Establish Black Health Equity Advocacy Week in California

(SACRAMENTO, CA) – The [California Black Health Network](#) (CBHN) lands a major success in declaring May 1-5, 2023, and every first week of May thereafter, as Black Health Equity Advocacy Week in California. This comes after Assemblymember Akilah Weber, M.D., (D-San Diego), with the unanimous support of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), introduced [ACR-53](#), a resolution that establishes the first of its kind, a statewide focus on the need to address the health disparities gap for Black Californians. The resolution also commends CBHN for its efforts to improve the health, well-being, and life expectancy of Black Californians.

“The life expectancy at birth for Black Californians is 76.2 years of age, which is five years shorter than the state average and the lowest life expectancy of all racial and ethnic groups in California. This disparity is a stark reminder of the systemic and institutional factors that contribute to health inequities in communities of color,” said Assemblymember Akilah Weber, M.D. “Addressing these disparities requires intentional efforts to provide access to quality, equitable healthcare, address social determinants of health, and dismantle structural racism in all its forms.”

In 2021, CBHN launched the [Campaign for Black Health Equity](#), a multi-year initiative that aims to decrease health disparities and improve the life expectancy of Black Californians. The resolution will help amplify CBHN’s campaign efforts across the state.

“We are beyond thrilled and grateful that Assemblymember Weber presented the resolution and that we received the unanimous support of the CLBC. We look forward to this being the beginning of a long-term partnership with the CLBC and of our work together to advance health equity for Black Californians. The resolution is significant for Black Californians and will bring greater attention and awareness to the need to not only close the disparities gap, but to begin to do so by focusing on dismantling the root causes of health inequities for our community,” said Rhonda Smith, CBHN’s Executive Director.

The resolution is also very significant for CBHN, as the organization will celebrate an important milestone this year – its [40th anniversary](#) event – on Thursday, May 4 during Black Health Equity Advocacy Week. Senator Steven Bradford (D-Gardena), Vice Chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus, will speak at the event and Brandi Cummings, an award-winning journalist and weekday morning anchor for KCRA 3 News, will be the event’s emcee.

In addition to the 40th anniversary celebration event, CBHN has several activities for Black Health Equity Advocacy Week, including a press event and a briefing on the State of Black Health in California.

In March, CBHN launched its inaugural Health Equity Advocacy Training (HEAT) Program which aims to organize, train, and empower key [Black Network Members](#) and [Black Health Agenda](#) stakeholders to amplify their collective voices and advocate for change in their local communities, as well as statewide,

on important issues that impede the ability to access the care, services, resources, and basic needs to live long healthy lives. During Black Health Equity Advocacy Week, HEAT Program participants will have the opportunity to put learning into action and meet with their state representatives to leverage their collective community capital to persuade decision-makers to implement policies that address health disparities for Black Californians.

“Our goal with the HEAT Program is to cultivate a culture of power building and a statewide network of health equity advocates and activists within the Black community to impact policy change at the state and local levels,” said Rhonda Smith. “Black Health Equity Advocacy Week falls on the heels of National Minority Health Month (NMHM), and we wanted to build upon and extend what happens in April to elevate the level of importance for us to come together statewide to engage in advocacy efforts to influence policy.”

For more information, contact AskCBHN@cbhn.info.

About the California Black Health Network

CBHN is the only Black-led, statewide organization dedicated to advancing health equity for all African Americans and Black Immigrants. CBHN conducts outreach, education, and advocacy to achieve health equity for Black Californians to address critical issues that lie at the intersection of racial justice, social justice, and environmental justice. We work to ensure that all Black Californians, regardless of their education, socio-economic class, zip code, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or immigration status have access to high-quality and equitable primary and behavioral healthcare and avoid unnecessarily succumbing to disease.

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