



CONTACT: Rob McLaughlin
617-538-3529

Statement by Lora Pellegrini, President and CEO of the Massachusetts Association of Health Plans, on Health Equity Legislation
July 15, 2025

MAHP and our member plans believe every Massachusetts resident deserves access to affordable, equitable, high-quality health care. Our member plans are proud to serve the state's most vulnerable residents – low-income adults, pregnant women, children, older adults, and people with disabilities – populations that continue to face persistent health disparities, starkly highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every day, MAHP plans are working to address the underlying causes of systemic inequities in health care and close gaps in health care delivery. Together with our community and provider partners, MAHP member plans are supporting our most vulnerable members through initiatives that will ensure better health outcomes, including addressing food insecurity, assisting with housing needs and transportation, and connecting members with vital community resources.

We commend the Health Equity Compact for its leadership in advancing meaningful reforms, including the fundamental work of incorporating health equity into the mission of our health care agencies, and ensuring reporting on health disparities in annual state reporting. These efforts are essential to systemic change.

While MAHP strongly supports the goals of advancing health equity and addressing longstanding disparities, we urge caution in advancing the bill in its entirety, particularly at a time when significant cuts to federal health care funding threaten to undermine the state's Medicaid program and reduce access to care for the very communities these reforms aim to support. Several provisions in the current draft raise concerns about their potential impact on overall health care costs. For example, mandating telehealth payment parity across the board would increase costs for both consumers and employers. We believe the market is already evolving to meet patient needs, with some plans reimbursing at in-person rates and others using alternative payment models that maintain access while promoting cost efficiency. We also share the Compact's commitment to strengthening investments in primary care and behavioral health, but these investments must be aligned with the state's cost growth benchmark to ensure they are sustainable over the long term.

MAHP and our member plans commend the Compact for elevating the conversation around health equity and stand ready to work with the Legislature, providers, and community partners to achieve meaningful, lasting improvements in health care access and outcomes for all Massachusetts residents.

###