



MINNESOTA PUBLIC  
HEALTH ASSOCIATION

[www.mpha.net](http://www.mpha.net)

January 14, 2021

The Honorable Joe Biden  
Presidential Transition Office  
1401 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear President-Elect Biden:

On behalf of the Minnesota Public Health Association (MPHA), we urge that, upon your inauguration, you move swiftly to rescind Executive Order (EO) 13950, *Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping*, which was signed by President Trump on September 22, 2020. The chilling effect of EO 13950 on our collective efforts to advance our nation's public health has been swift and alarming. We stand with the Safe States Alliance, American Public Health Association, and other signatories in calling for this public health action. Our organizations have long worked to ensure the health, well-being, safety, and prosperity of all people in our nation, and we share the belief that the goals of EO 13950 are misguided.

MPHA is a volunteer-driven professional organization made up of over 430 public health professionals throughout the state of Minnesota. Our mission is to create a healthier Minnesota through effective public health practice and engaged citizens.

**MPHA recognizes that at its core, racism and social injustice of any kind is a public health crisis.** Today, our country is in the grips of a global pandemic of historic proportions. Each day, the pandemic inflicts disproportionate damage on communities that have been historically disenfranchised and marginalized. The need to support systemic efforts to bolster diversity, equity and inclusion has never been greater. This EO presents a very real barrier to evidence-based diversity programs and equity-related initiatives across all federal agencies, their grantees and contractors.

Many of our society's systems and structures have created unjust barriers that limit opportunities for people based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, and country of origin. These systems and structures reinforce racism, sustain social injustices, and violate the most basic of human rights. As a result of these structural inequities, many people in our country lack job opportunities and living wages, access to quality education, healthy food, safe neighborhoods, quality housing, or basic healthcare. Additionally, these circumstances can create or exacerbate many adverse issues, including child abuse and neglect, domestic violence,

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and community violence. We believe that these systemic and structural barriers undermine our collective efforts to advance the health, well-being and prosperity of all people.

Racial equity conversations serve as a catalyst for change, moving diverse communities in a unified approach toward achieving equitable opportunities and health outcomes for all marginalized groups. Thoughtful trainings in the workplace help build awareness and dialogue, produce transformative ideas, and implement sustainable solutions that improve our nation's public health. MPHA has begun a concurrent journey to have similar conversations to better serve the people of Minnesota in efforts to advance the health, well-being and prosperity of all people.

Governments, local, state and federal must work to ensure that *everyone* – regardless of their race, orientation, nationality, or country of origin – has an opportunity to achieve economic, educational, and personal prosperity throughout their lifetimes.

We look forward to working with you to rescind EO 13950. Furthermore, we offer ourselves as a resource on many other policies that have the potential to significantly improve our nation's health and quality of life. For more information, or to discuss this issue in greater detail, please feel free to contact Merry Grande, Executive Director of the Minnesota Public Health Association, at [admin@mpha.net](mailto:admin@mpha.net).

Sincerely,

Merry Grande, MPHA Executive Director

Kathleen Norlien, MPHA President

Jaime Martinez, Erica Fishman, Melanie Peterson-Hickey, MPHA Health Equity Committee Chairs

Annie Halland, Laura Klein, MPHA Policy and Advocacy Committee Chairs

CC to Minnesota Congressional Delegates:

Senator Tina Smith

Senator Amy Kloubuchar

Representative Jim Hagedorn

Representative Angie Craig

Representative Dean Phillips

Representative Betty McCollum

Representative Illhan Omar

Representative Tom Emmer

Representative Michelle Fischbach

Representative Pete Stauber

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz

Minnesota Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan