

# HEARTLAND ALLIANCE

ENDING POVERTY

March, 2016

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the Research and Policy Department at [Heartland Alliance](#), we are writing to express our support for your work through the Congressional Progressive Caucus to address the pervasive structural racism that leaves deep and lasting negative impacts on the lives of people of color. We are eager serve as a resource and partner with you to advance a racial equity agenda, especially as it relates to ending poverty and advancing economic opportunity for communities and people of color.

Heartland Alliance is a leading anti-poverty organization. We believe that all of us deserve the opportunity to improve our lives, and each year we help ensure this opportunity for nearly one million people around the world who are homeless, living in poverty, or seeking safety.

Our Research and Policy Department is deeply committed to advancing solutions to the systemic issues that drive poverty, including structural racism and persistent racial inequality. Our work to advance a racial equity agenda is multi-faceted and reaches across our Department's three teams:

[National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity](#) (NI) is dedicated to ending chronic unemployment and poverty and has expertise advancing policy, systems, and programmatic solutions to promote access to employment and economic opportunity for people of color. Through the [B.MORE Initiative](#), NI works to improve the employment outcomes and economic health of low-income men and youth of color. NI is a content expert on a number of issue areas at the intersection of race and access to economic opportunity, including reentry, child support enforcement, the social safety net, workforce development, opportunity youth, and homelessness.

The [Social IMPACT Research Center](#) does research that helps leaders create change. IMPACT's most recent report, [Racism's Toll: Report on Illinois Poverty](#), examines the moral, human, and economic toll of racial inequality and the generational effects of racially-charged policy and systems on the lives of people of color. In keeping with IMPACT's aim to equip stakeholders to advance real-world solutions to poverty, the report puts forward bold policy solutions from a racial equity lens. IMPACT has extensive experience using national data sets and has led numerous evaluations and research studies on topic areas including workforce development and education, access to credit and the racial wealth gap, human services, homelessness, housing, and nutrition assistance, among others.

With a focus on Illinois, the [Policy & Advocacy](#) (P&A) team advocates for policies that help end poverty. As the co-chair of the Illinois Asset Building Group, P&A has done extensive work to close the [racial wealth gap](#) and ensure that communities of color have access to opportunities

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for wealth building and future prosperity. P&A also works on behalf of communities of color to reform the criminal justice system, advance worker protections, ensure access to health care, housing, and income supports, and increase wages and access to employment for low-income workers.

With our policy advocacy, field building, and research expertise, and our commitment to advancing a racial equity agenda, we are happy to serve as a resource to the Congressional Progressive Caucus as you move ahead to build a more just, humane, and equitable society.

For additional information and to identify ways to partner, please feel free to contact:

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Sincerely,



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