



PRESS RELEASE
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**Arizona Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
Releases Report Examining Disparities in Access to and Quality of Pediatric
Healthcare for Racial and Ethnic Minority Families**

The Arizona Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has released its report, *Civil Rights and Disparities in Pediatric Health Care Access for Racial and Ethnic Minority Families in Arizona*. The report is based on a series of web hearings conducted from summer 2023 to winter 2024. The Committee gathered testimony and written statements addressing disparities in access to and the quality of pediatric healthcare for minority families.

The Committee identified eight key findings, with four focused on the Native American community. These findings include:

1. Despite recent efforts to expand insurance eligibility, Arizona continues to have a high rate of uninsured children.
2. Foster youth face significant challenges in accessing healthcare.
3. A shortage of healthcare providers raises concerns about widening disparities in access to routine and specialty care.
4. Holistic and culturally competent pediatric care is particularly beneficial for Native American children.
5. Bias in the treatment of Native American children creates barriers to accessing and receiving quality healthcare.

The report offers 13 recommendations for corrective action, directed to stakeholders including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, U.S. Congress, the Arizona Legislature, the Arizona Governor, and the Arizona Department of Health Services. Key recommendations include:

1. Lifting the cap on Medicare-funded residency positions to improve access to care and address community needs.
2. Increasing funding for outreach and awareness about the newly enacted KidsCare program to ensure families know how to enroll.
3. Collaborating with state agencies to develop initiatives that advance pediatric healthcare access for racial and ethnic minority communities.
4. Expanding funding for KidsCare to enhance access to pediatric healthcare for Arizona's minority families.

Vice Chair Eric Yordy stated, "The Committee elected to study disparities in pediatric healthcare in Arizona because of the importance of quality care for children and the vast

diversity of Arizona's population. We sought recommendations to improve access to healthcare, particularly given the number of Native American reservations and rural towns in Arizona. Arizona's rapidly growing population, a shortage of healthcare professionals, and a complicated insurance system compound concerns about pediatric healthcare in the future. The Committee received robust testimony on various issues and aimed to provide actionable recommendations to simplify the system and increase access to pediatric healthcare for racial and ethnic minority families in Arizona."

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. For information about the Commission, please visit www.usccr.gov and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).