



THE MENDED HEARTS, INC.
International Headquarters & Resource Center
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To inspire hope and improve the quality of life
of heart patients and their families through ongoing
peer-to-peer support, education, and advocacy.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS May 10, 2022

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Health Subcommittee, Majority Staff
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: H.R.3771 South Asian Heart Health Awareness and Research Act of 2021 - The Mended
Hearts, Inc. Statement for the Record

Dear Ms. Mullon,

On behalf of The Mended Hearts, Inc. Board of Directors, 85,000 members, and the millions of individuals living with cardiovascular disease, I would like to respectfully submit this letter of support for H.R.3771 - South Asian Heart Health Awareness and Research Act of 2021. Introduced by Reps. Pramila Jayapal and Joe Wilson, this legislation would provide much needed funding for research and improvements in cardiovascular health for individuals of the South Asian population living with cardiovascular disease.

South Asians living in the U.S. are more likely to die from heart disease than the general population. This risk though has been largely shrouded by a paucity of data. There were around 3.4 million people of South Asian descent living in the U.S. as of 2010, based on U.S. Census Bureau data. Despite the size of their population, the threats to South Asians' cardiovascular health have been obscured because, until recently, researchers have looked at Asian-Americans as a monolithic group.¹ It is not clear why South Asians are more prone to heart disease than other groups. While it is clear that cardiovascular disease can be passed down in families, researchers have yet to find a specific genetic cause that would make South Asians more at risk than other groups.²

The Mended Hearts, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that focuses on inspiring hope and improving the lives of heart patients through ongoing peer-to-peer support, education, and advocacy. We have 85,000 members in the US and 20 countries world-wide. We know that as individuals, patients face many different social and medically complex barriers to reducing their risk of cardiovascular disease. It is vitally important to have an individual understanding of the

¹ <https://www.acc.org/latest-in-cardiology/articles/2019/05/07/12/42/cover-story-south-asians-and-cardiovascular-disease-the-hidden-threat>

² <https://www.heart.org/en/news/2018/05/29/south-asians-high-risk-of-cardiovascular-disease-has-been-hidden-by-a-lack-of-data>



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unique barriers that the South Asian population experiences in order to provide long term solutions for reducing their risk factor and improving the lives of those living with cardiovascular disease.

Developing culturally appropriate education on a variety of topics would provide this unique population with the tools they need to be empowered to make better health choices and allow for lifestyle changes to happen in a way that can directly affect the cardiovascular health of not only the individuals that we are aiming to provide assistance to, but the generations of individuals in the future.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men, women, and people of most racial and ethnic groups in the United States. We appreciate the action by Congress to address cardiovascular disease as an important health topic and hope that this legislation will be one of the many steps that are taken to address the disparities we see in minority populations. Please reach out to me with any additional questions or comments on this topic.

Thank you,

Andrea Baer, MS, BCPA
Executive Director
The Mended Hearts, Inc.