



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **OVERSIGHT AND REFORM** CHAIRWOMAN **CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

Two Bills to Improve Equitable Provision of Government Services: Federal Government Equity Improvement Act Equity in Agency Planning Act

Lead Sponsor: Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney
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On his first day in office, President Biden signed Executive Order 13985 (“Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”)—a historic executive order establishing a whole-of-government effort to embed equity in all aspects of the federal government and eliminate barriers to equal opportunities for underserved communities. E.O. 13985 required, among other things, that agencies evaluate the challenges of providing services to underserved populations, and work to improve their provision of services to these groups.

The President’s order directed federal agencies to conduct assessments to identify barriers to equal opportunity and programmatic benefits for people of color and other underserved groups. In April 2022, the Biden Administration took two key steps by releasing (1) agencies’ equity action plans that incorporated the results of their assessments, including next steps, and (2) the Equitable Data Working Group Report, which outlined recommendations for advancing the use of equitable data across the federal government. With the Administration’s leadership, agencies have made great strides in evaluating challenges to equitable federal policymaking and planning for improvements.

Although E.O. 13985 has begun the important work of improving the equitable provision of services for all Americans, as the Administration recognized, “[a]dvancing equity is not a one-year project—it is a generational commitment.” To help fulfill this commitment, Congress must act to ensure meaningful implementation of agency plans, data measurement, and whole-of-government coordination to advance the goals of E.O. 13985.

Two bills—**The Federal Government Equity Improvement Act** and **The Equity in Agency Planning Act**—would ensure that agencies continue this important work for years to come.

The Federal Government Equity Improvement Act would:

- Establish an Agency Equity Advisory Team within each agency, led by the agency’s Performance Improvement Officer and with representation from key internal agency offices, which would serve as an agency hub on equity issues.
- Establish an Equity Subcommittee of the existing Performance Improvement Council, which would serve as an interagency working group to allow agencies to—among other things—share information regarding practices that have led to more equitable service provision across the federal government.
 - The Subcommittee would be required to solicit input from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders to determine best practices.
- Establish an Equitable Data Working Group within the existing Chief Data Officer Council, which would serve as an interagency, data-focused working group to share best practices related to the equitable collection and use of data, among other things.

The Equity in Agency Planning Act would amend various agency performance planning requirements to ensure that agencies prioritize improving the equitable provision of services in setting agency goals. Specifically, the legislation would:

- Require that agencies include at least one goal, or 20% of the total number of goals, whichever is greater, relating to improving the equitable provision of services when they submit the following statutorily required goals:
 - 1) “General Goals” in Agency Strategic Plans
 - 2) “Performance Goals” in Agency Performance Plans
 - 3) “Priority Goals” that are a subset of agency Performance Goals
- Require agencies to consult with NGOs and other stakeholders as they develop and revise their strategic plans and work towards their performance goals.