

House Resolution 578

By: Representatives Schofield of the 60th, Mitchell of the 88th, Scott of the 76th, Hutchinson of the 107th, Jackson of the 64th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the National Black Caucus of State Legislators and the critical need for
2 increasing access to healthcare, food, and credit; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) has a long history of
4 creating policies to end disparities that have plagued communities of color; and

5 WHEREAS, the challenge faced by minority and low- and moderate-income communities
6 is not the availability of unhealthy fast food as much as it is the lack of access to healthy
7 alternatives; and

8 WHEREAS, a 2014 study from Johns Hopkins University comparing census tracts of similar
9 poverty levels found that black communities had the fewest supermarkets, white
10 communities had the most, and multiracial communities were in the middle; and

11 WHEREAS, it is not the availability of certain healthcare resources as much as it is the lack
12 of quality healthcare that creates difficulties for individuals in black communities; and

13 WHEREAS, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, black
14 individuals are 1.9 times more at risk of death due to COVID-19; and

15 WHEREAS, it is not the availability of financial resources as much as it is the lack of access
16 to resources for building good credit that hinders black communities from improving their
17 economic situations; and

18 WHEREAS, according to a study by Morgan State University, financially at-risk conditions
19 such as a lack of financial institutions and the marked presence of predatory lenders exist in
20 the aggregate, forming concentrated zones that are more likely located in communities that
21 are home to people of color, those less educated, and those of low economic means; and

22 WHEREAS, the NBCSL recognizes the urgent need to enact national and state plans to
23 address the availability and equitable distribution of critical resources in all 50 states and
24 territories; and

25 WHEREAS, in partnership with the Equitable Growth Fund and others, the NBCSL is
26 identifying and addressing healthcare, food, and credit deserts; and

27 WHEREAS, the NBCSL is dedicated to studying and developing model legislation and
28 formulating other solutions that use data to assess and eradicate such deserts; and

29 WHEREAS, the NBCSL believes that a data-centric approach to such social justice issues
30 is needed to manage government resources and determine where private resources need to
31 be developed.

32 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
33 the National Black Caucus of State Legislators is recognized for its efforts in identifying the
34 urgent need for developing and implementing state and community based programs to

35 support initiatives aimed at reducing healthcare, food, and financial disparities in order to
36 bring healthier options into underserved communities across the United States.

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
38 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to
39 the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, the public, and the press.