

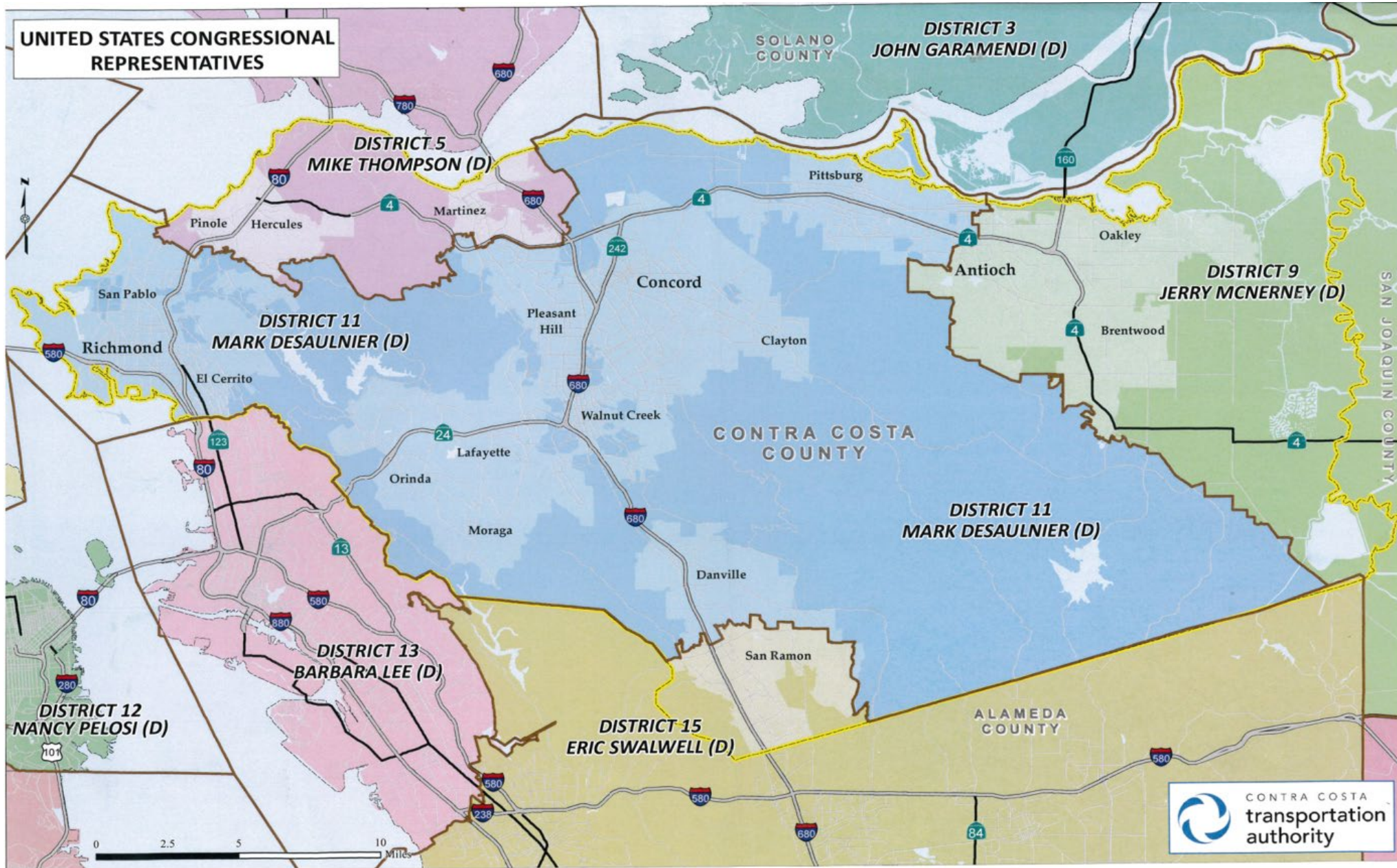


Mental Health, Coronavirus, and the African American Community

Featuring Ms. Gigi Crowder and Dr. Nicola Parr

FEBRUARY 23, 2022

UNITED STATES CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES



Contra Costa Racial & Ethnic Makeup

Race	2019
White	65.1%
Black or African American	9.5%
Asian	18.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.6%
Two or More Races	5.4%

Ethnicity	2019
Hispanic or Latino	26.0%

Stressors of the Pandemic

- ▶ The pandemic has placed additional stress on individuals for a variety of reasons.
 - ▶ Grief over loss of loved ones
 - ▶ Anxiety for essential workers who must risk their safety to provide for their/their family's needs
 - ▶ Stress about being able to find safe and adequate child care arrangements
 - ▶ Worry about job loss and the associated financial consequences
 - ▶ Difficulty in finding culturally competent health care services
 - ▶ Separation from family not living in the same household and inability to gather for holidays or special occasions

Mental and Behavioral Health Impacts of the Pandemic

- ▶ The pandemic has had a serious impact on our well-being.
 - ▶ Increased rates of anxiety and depression: 41.1% of adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder in January 2021, up from 11% in early 2019.
 - ▶ Increased rates of substance use disorder: 13% of adults surveyed in June 2020 reported new or increased substance use as they struggle to cope with the pandemic.
 - ▶ Suicidal thoughts: 11% of adults surveyed in June 2020 reported having suicidal thoughts in the past 30 days.

Racial Health Disparities Exacerbated by the Pandemic

- ▶ Age adjusted data shows that African Americans are twice as likely to die from coronavirus compared to white Americans.
 - ▶ In June 2021, Gilbert Salinas, Chief Equity Officer at Contra Costa Health Services, stated that African Americans represented 42% of all coronavirus-related deaths in Contra Costa from May 1 to June 2 of that year.
 - ▶ U.S. Department of Labor data shows that just 18% of African Americans hold jobs that allow telework, while 26% of whites hold such jobs. This leads to worse coronavirus outcomes in the African American community as well as additional stress about risking one's safety to provide for family needs.
- ▶ Research has found that over the course of the pandemic, 46% of African American respondents have experienced greater stress and additional mental health challenges.
 - ▶ Despite this increase, just 21% say that they have received any mental health treatment.

Barriers to Care for the African American Community

- ▶ Socioeconomic factors
 - ▶ As of 2018, 11.5% of African American adults did not have health insurance. The high cost of therapy and medication make treatment out of reach for most uninsured people.
- ▶ Stigma
 - ▶ Research has found that 63% of African Americans believe that a mental health disorder is a sign of weakness. Stigma makes those with mental health disorders less willing to discuss their experience with others and less likely to seek treatment.
- ▶ Lack of culturally competent care
 - ▶ Bias from health care providers can lead to misdiagnosis and inadequate treatment. A history of discrimination in the health care system coupled with inadequate care can discourage African Americans from seeking treatment for mental health conditions.

Behavioral Health Resources

- ▶ The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has compiled excellent resources on African American mental health. Resources include advice on seeking culturally competent care and on how to be an effective advocate for reducing mental health stigma.
 - ▶ NAMI's main webpage for African American Mental Health resources is <https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Identity-and-Cultural-Dimensions/Black-African-American>.
 - ▶ NAMI Contra Costa helps facilitate the CalHope initiative, providing resources and culturally sensitive crisis counseling for African Americans, by African Americans. More information is available at <https://www.namicontracosta.org/calhope.html> or (925) 465-3864.
- ▶ Contra Costa Health Services operates a 24-hour access line at 1 (888) 678-7277, with services available for those in mental or emotional crisis.
- ▶ The Contra Costa Crisis Center also operates a 24-hour phone line for crisis support, available at 1 (800) 833-2900.

Contact Our Office

Walnut Creek

3100 Oak Road
Suite 110
Walnut Creek, CA
(925) 933-2660

Richmond

440 Civic Center Plaza
Second Floor
Richmond, CA
(510) 620-1000

Washington, DC

503 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC
(202) 225-2095



Facebook: /RepMarkDeSaulnier



Instagram: @RepDeSaulnier



Twitter: @RepDeSaulnier



Website: desaulnier.house.gov