

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Support Community Health Centers
Sign Appropriations Letter TODAY!
Deadline: March 19

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in signing the attached letter to Chairman Tom Cole and Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro encouraging the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies to continue support for the Health Centers program in FY2017.

Community Health Centers are locally-controlled, non-profit entities that provide primary care, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services in our most underserved rural and urban areas. There are over 1,300 Health Centers operating in over 9,000 local communities nationwide, serving approximately 24 million people who would otherwise not have access to care. Health Centers serve as the "health care home" for America's most vulnerable populations, including one in seven of America's uninsured, one-third of those living in poverty, and one in seven Medicaid beneficiaries. More than 7 million children and over 300,000 veterans get their health care in community health centers.

Health Centers specialize in providing cost-effective and high-quality primary and preventive health care that generates **\$24 billion annually in savings to the health care system, due in large part to their success in reducing the need for patients to seek care in costlier health care settings like emergency departments.**

Today there are 62 million people who lack access to primary care across the country. In many communities without a Health Center today, underserved populations continue to encounter little or no access to primary care. For the more than 9,000 communities currently served by Health Centers, federal investments play a key part in supporting the comprehensive range of services they provide.

We ask that you join us in supporting Health Centers as a proven and cost-effective solution to this access challenge and invest in Health Centers to strengthen primary care capacity. Please contact Kristen O'Neill with Rep. Gene Green at kristen.oneill@mail.house.gov or 5-1688 or Kristin Seum with Rep. Bilirakis at kristin.seum@mail.house.gov or 5-5755 to sign the letter by March 19th.

Sincerely,



GENE GREEN
Member of Congress



GUS BILIRAKIS
Member of Congress

NOTE: This funding letter is a general support letter and recognizing individual Members' approaches in this fiscal climate, it does not contain a specific appropriations level. However, those Members who would like to submit a specific programmatic FY16 level for the Community Health Centers program will be provided with detailed instructions on how to enter the programmatic level into the request database.

March XX, 2016

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We want to thank the Subcommittee for your continued support and recognition of Health Centers as a longstanding bipartisan solution to the primary care access problems facing this country. **During the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Appropriations process, we respectfully request that the Subcommittee continue to recognize Health Centers as providers of high quality, cost-effective primary care and that you work to ensure the continuation of the innovative, high-value health center model of care within the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies legislation for FY2017.**

Since the first health centers opened their doors more than fifty years ago, health centers have provided primary care, dental, behavioral, pharmacy, vision and a variety of complementary services to America's most vulnerable patients and communities. Today, thanks to longstanding bipartisan support, well over 1,300 health center organizations serve more than 9,000 urban and rural communities nationwide. Health centers are the health care home for more than 24 million patients, including more than 7 million children and nearly 300,000 veterans. Health centers employ more than 175,000 Americans, and generate billions of dollars both in economic impact and overall cost-savings the health care system.

Health centers have continually proven to be a worthwhile investment by delivering high quality, affordable health care, and the demand for health center services has grown in recent years. Combined with the investments made on a bipartisan basis through the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization of 2015 (MACRA), the annual appropriation is critical to the operations of health centers nationwide as they meet that demand. Without access to primary care, many people, including the chronically ill, delay seeking health care until they are seriously ill, leading to higher costs and worse health outcomes. The health center model is designed to address this and other health challenges by fostering innovation and high-value care at the community level.

As Congress works to improve access to care, reduce health care expenditures, and promote patient-centered solutions to our health care challenges, we urge the Subcommittee to continue to support Health Centers, which have a proven track record of success. Thank you for your continued support of the vital role Health Centers play in preserving and expanding access

to care in the communities they serve. We ask that as you continue to face difficult choices on budget priorities, that you support this proven and cost-effective model of care.

Sincerely,