

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2026

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
Chair, Senate Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and
Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and Related
Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Capito and Ranking Member Baldwin:

We thank the subcommittee for your continued support and recognition of Community Health Centers as a longstanding, bipartisan solution to keep Americans healthy and save taxpayer dollars. As you proceed with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 appropriations process, we respectfully request that the subcommittee provide strong funding for Community Health Centers within the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies legislation for FY27. This will ensure health centers remain providers of high-quality, cost-effective comprehensive primary care for millions of people living in rural areas and for underserved communities nationwide.

Since the first health centers opened their doors 60 years ago, they have proven to be an excellent investment, providing access to primary and preventive care, dental care, mental health, substance use disorder treatments, pharmacy services, vision care, and complementary services to every American. Today, thanks to persistent support from Congress, there are 1,512 health centers delivering care at over 17,000 locations in every state and territory, including through more than 1,200 mobile vans. According to a longitudinal study of multi-year patient records, health centers serve 52 million patients nationally, or nearly one in seven Americans [Weitzman Institute, 2025]. In 2024, health centers cared for ten million rural residents (1 in 3 rural Americans), nine million children, nearly four million seniors, and 430,000 veterans.

Each year, health centers save the overall health system billions of dollars by reducing the burden of chronic disease through prevention and early intervention. Health center patients of working age (18-64) are 35 percent more likely to have a chronic condition and 31 percent more likely to have two or more chronic conditions compared to patients seeing private practice providers. Despite the complexities of their patient population, health centers consistently achieve positive health outcomes for the people they serve, surpassing national quality benchmarks.

Furthermore, health centers support more than 800,000 jobs and generate more than \$261 billion in economic activity in our communities. The Congressional Budget Office has confirmed that investing in health centers would directly lower long-term spending by Medicare and Medicaid by decreasing preventable emergency department visits, hospital admission, and invasive procedures. A commitment to health center funding will allow more of our constituents to access health centers' cost-effective model of care, and it would increase efficiency in government programs.

Congress funds health centers through both the annual appropriations process and with multi-year funding through the Community Health Center Fund. Health centers are proud to have sustained strong bipartisan support among Members of Congress for six decades. With their multi-year funding set to expire on December 31st, 2026, we urge you to minimize uncertainty on the discretionary side by providing strong appropriations in

FY 2027. Your leadership will help health centers meet the growing demand for the preventive and primary care that saves lives and taxpayer dollars.

This funding will also enable local solutions to primary care workforce shortages that have been impacting communities. Health centers are growing their mission-driven workforce through partnerships with high schools and community colleges, expanding apprenticeship opportunities, preceptorship training, and career laddering programs. Your subcommittee's support for health centers will help alleviate primary care workforce shortages and improve economic opportunities in rural and underserved areas nationwide.

As Congress works to improve access to preventive care, reduce long-term spending, and promote more patient-driven solutions to chronic disease challenges, we urge the subcommittee to continue its support for Community Health Centers, recognizing their demonstrated record of success at improving health outcomes and reducing long-term health care costs. Thank you for your continued leadership.

Sincerely,

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