



October 6, 2015

The Honorable John Thune  
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert P. Casey Jr.  
393 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune and Senator Casey,

On behalf of more than 1,300 community health centers nationwide, serving over 24 million patients in more than 9,000 communities, I write today to offer our strong support for your effort to extend Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) coverage to volunteer health professionals at community health centers through introduction of the Family Health Care Accessibility Act.

As you well know, over their 50-year history, health centers have a demonstrated record of significantly reducing costs for the health care system overall while improving health outcomes. Because they are located in medically underserved urban and rural areas and serve medically underserved populations, however, health centers often face barriers when it comes to filling all of their health professional vacancies.

While health center employees have long been covered by FTCA for medical malpractice purposes, health center volunteers have not been eligible for this coverage. This makes the recruiting of volunteers incredibly difficult: the health center often must choose between turning the volunteer away or expending large sums of money on supplemental medical malpractice gap insurance. If they choose to take on a volunteer, health centers end up devoting resources to insurance that otherwise could have been used to expand the highly cost-effective health center model of care to additional patients.

Your legislation is a commonsense bipartisan solution to this problem by simply extending health centers' existing FTCA coverage to their qualified health professional volunteers. This will result in improved access to care for the communities health centers serve, enhanced volunteer opportunities for our nation's health professionals, and savings for the health care system overall.

**Health centers nationwide thank you for your leadership and urge the Senate's consideration and passage of the Family Health Care Accessibility Act.**

Sincerely,

Daniel R. Hawkins, Jr.  
Senior Vice President, Public Policy and Research