

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 23, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Ranking Member Blunt,

We want to thank the Subcommittee for your continued support and recognition of Community Health Centers as a longstanding bipartisan solution to the primary care access problems facing this country. As you proceed with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 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 FY 2022. This will ensure health centers can continue providing high-quality, cost-effective primary care and innovative health services to underserved communities across the nation.

Since the first Community Health Centers opened their doors more than 50 years ago, they have provided quality and affordable care to those most in need. Today, thanks to longstanding bipartisan support in Congress, there are now more than 1,400 health center organizations serving more than 13,000 urban and rural communities in every state and U.S. territory. Health Centers are the main source of care for roughly 30 million patients, including nine million children and 400,000 veterans. These centers employ 253,000 people, generate \$63.4 billion in economic impact for local communities, and provide cost savings for the nation's overall health care system.

For the past decade, Congress has supported health centers on a bipartisan basis through the annual appropriation for the Health Center program, combined with investments in the mandatory Community Health Center Fund. With the Health Center Fund set at level funding for FY 2022, we urge you to prioritize funding for health centers in FY 2022. This funding is critical to the success of health centers as they work to meet growing demand for affordable care and respond to the changing needs of their communities—whether helping fight flu outbreaks, providing HIV/AIDS prevention care, addressing rising maternal mortality rates, or offering opioid addiction treatment.

Health centers have played a significant role in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, providing much-needed testing, contact tracing, education, and now vaccinations in communities hardest hit by the deadly disease. Approximately 98 percent of these centers can test for the

virus, with 81 percent operating walk-up or drive-up testing options. These providers are trusted voices in their communities with access to hard-to-reach populations. Forty-seven percent of patients who receive testing at these centers are racial and ethnic minorities, and 42 percent live in rural areas.

Almost one year into this crisis, Community Health Centers continue to play an essential role in fighting the pandemic. In fact, both the previous and current Administrations have said health centers would be expected to play an increased role in administering COVID-19 vaccinations. These centers are ready to do their part, but federal resources are needed to keep their doors open so they can continue delivering care. For many health centers, cash reserves have rapidly depleted and the situation is now critical. As of January 2021, 633 health centers had closed temporarily because of COVID-19. Communities need these centers open in order to keep up the pace with our national vaccination effort.

As Congress works to improve access to care, improve efficiency, and promote patient-centered health care solutions, we urge the Subcommittee to continue providing strong support for Community Health Centers. Their need of federal assistance is greater than ever.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

/s/ Debbie Stabenow  
DEBBIE STABENOW  
United States Senator

/s/ Roger F. Wicker  
ROGER F. WICKER  
United States Senator

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin  
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN  
United States Senator

/s/ James Risch  
JAMES RISCH  
United States Senator

/s/ Thomas R. Carper  
THOMAS R. CARPER  
United States Senator

/s/ Michael Crapo  
MICHAEL CRAPO  
United States Senator

/s/ Robert Menendez  
ROBERT MENENDEZ  
United States Senator

/s/ Roger Marshall  
ROGER MARSHALL  
United States Senator

/s/ Tina Smith  
TINA SMITH  
United States Senator

/s/ Kevin Cramer  
KEVIN CRAMER  
United States Senator

/s/ Richard J. Durbin  
RICHARD J. DURBIN  
United States Senator

/s/ John Hoeven  
JOHN HOEVEN  
United States Senator

/s/ Margaret Wood Hassan  
MARGARET WOOD HASSAN  
United States Senator

/s/ Debra Fischer  
DEBRA FISCHER  
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine  
TIM KAINE  
United States Senator

/s/ Bill Cassidy  
BILL CASSIDY  
United States Senator

/s/ Joe Manchin III  
JOE MANCHIN III  
United States Senator

/s/ John Cornyn  
JOHN CORNYN  
United States Senator

/s/ Jacky Rosen  
JACKY ROSEN  
United States Senator

/s/ Steve Daines  
STEVE DAINES  
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Baldwin  
TAMMY BALDWIN  
United States Senator

/s/ James Lankford  
JAMES LANKFORD  
United States Senator

/s/ Cory A. Booker  
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator

/s/ Thom Tillis  
THOM TILLIS  
United States Senator

/s/ Jeffrey A. Merkley  
Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator

/s/ Cynthia Lummis  
CYNTHIA LUMMIS  
United States Senator

/s/ Jeanne Shaheen  
JEANNE SHAHEEN  
United States Senator

/s/ Susan M. Collins  
SUSAN M. COLLINS  
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen  
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN  
United States Senator

/s/ Mike Rounds  
MIKE ROUNDS  
United States Senator

/s/ Sherrod Brown  
SHERROD BROWN  
United States Senator

/s/ Richard Burr  
RICHARD BURR  
United States Senator

/s/ Dianne Feinstein  
DIANNE FEINSTEIN  
United States Senator

/s/ Jim Inhofe  
JIM INHOFE  
United States Senator

/s/ Ron Wyden  
RON WYDEN  
United States Senator

/s/ Todd Young  
TODD YOUNG  
United States Senator

/s/ Angus S. King, Jr.  
ANGUS S. KING, JR.  
United States Senator

/s/ Daniel Sullivan  
DANIEL SULLIVAN  
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher S. Murphy  
CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY  
United States Senator

/s/ Bernard Sanders  
BERNARD SANDERS  
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Duckworth  
TAMMY DUCKWORTH  
United States Senator

/s/ Raphael Warnock  
RAPHAEL WARNOCK  
United States Senator

/s/ Mark Kelly  
MARK KELLY  
United States Senator

/s/ Edward J. Markey  
EDWARD J. MARKEY  
United States Senator

/s/ Elizabeth Warren  
ELIZABETH WARREN  
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher A. Coons  
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS  
United States Senator

/s/ Gary C. Peters  
GARY C. PETERS  
United States Senator

/s/ Michael F. Bennet  
MICHAEL F. BENNET  
United States Senator

/s/ Mazie K. Hirono  
MAZIE K. HIRONO  
United States Senator

/s/ Maria Cantwell  
MARIA CANTWELL  
United States Senator

/s/ Brian Schatz  
BRIAN SCHATZ  
United States Senator

/s/ Jon Ossoff  
JON OSSOFF  
United States Senator

/s/ Amy Klobuchar  
AMY KLOBUCHAR  
United States Senator

/s/ Jon Tester  
JON TESTER  
United States Senator

/s/ Sheldon Whitehouse  
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE  
United States Senator

/s/ Richard Blumenthal  
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
United States Senator

/s/ Bob Casey  
BOB CASEY  
United States Senator

/s/ Kirsten Gillibrand  
KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND  
United States Senator

/s/ Jack Reed  
JACK REED  
United States Senator

/s/ Mark R. Warner  
MARK R. WARNER  
United States Senator

/s/ Ben Ray Luján  
BEN RAY LUJÁN  
United States Senator

/s/ John Hickenlooper  
JOHN HICKENLOOPER  
United States Senator

/s/ Alex Padilla  
ALEX PADILLA  
United States Senator

/s/ Kyrsten Sinema  
KYRSTEN SINEMA  
United States Senator

/s/ Martin Heinrich  
MARTIN HEINRICH  
United States Senator

/s/ Catherine Cortez Masto  
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO  
United States Senator