

# Appropriations Funding



## Preserve, Strengthen and Expand the Community Health Center System of Care

As the largest primary care network in the country, Community Health Centers play an integral role in our nation's health care system. The next step is to build on the successes of the past by Preserving, Strengthening, and Expanding the model to more communities and populations.

### Preserve

Preserve the capacity of Community Health Centers to continue to serve our existing 29 million underserved, rural, and urban patients by ensuring sufficient long-term, stable funding.

### Strengthen

Strengthen the capacity of health centers to serve their current patients by improving quality, bolstering services, strengthening emergency preparedness, integrating community systems to address the social determinants of health, bolstering information technology capacity, and launching new innovative clinical and administrative workforce initiatives.

### Expand

Expand the Health Center Program to serve millions more patients into the future and deepen the services provided to existing patients to include critically needed services such as oral health, mental health, and substance use disorder (SUD) services like Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) and school-based health center services. Expansion is also needed to bring services to additional patient groups such as America's growing elderly population, public housing residents, those experiencing homelessness, agricultural workers, rural residents, and our veterans among others.

### The Impact

During the two-year COVID-19 pandemic health centers have continued to demonstrate results for their patients. For example, health centers have provided over 19 million vaccinations and tested over 16 million patients with the majority being from racial and/or ethnic minority backgrounds.

**Widening the program by extending care into additional communities** most recently revealed by COVID-19 to have clear inequities in health status would yield millions more patients.

**Deepening services** at existing sites to include greater access to maternal/newborn health care, COVID-19 long-term issues, mental and behavioral health care, oral health and aging, and investing in the health center workforce of the future to deliver these services.

Health centers deliver an excellent return on this federal investment:

- They **reach individuals with the greatest difficulty accessing or affording health care services**, including those with chronic diseases at risk for costly health complications, and guarantee them access to high-quality care, improve health outcomes and narrow health disparities.
- Health centers are efficient and **save the health care system \$24 billion every year**, reducing unnecessary inpatient hospitalizations and emergency room use.

## How you can help:

- Support **\$1.8 billion in discretionary funding** for Community Health Centers in the FY2022 appropriations bill.
- Support continued **robust funding in discretionary funding** for Community Health Centers through the FY2023 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill by signing on to the annual appropriations letter led by Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Sens. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Roger Wicker (R-MS) to the Appropriations Committees.