



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers

– FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS – EXPANDING ACCESS TO CARE THROUGH THE HEALTH CENTERS PROGRAM

Health centers have charted a multi-year **ACCESS for All America** plan for growth that will enable centers to target resources and expand care to 60 million Americans that currently have no access. A targeted and balanced approach to expansion is needed, incorporating new sites, expanded capacity, additional services and regular base grant adjustments to meet increased demand and costs. With these goals in the forefront, Health Centers have focused on securing the resources necessary to meet the comprehensive health care needs of 30 million patients by 2015. Recognizing this tremendous need, we are grateful for the actions of the 111th Congress, including:

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

Last year Congress provided an additional \$2 billion for the Health Centers program. Of this amount, \$500 million was for health center operations, including grants for 126 new health centers and supplemental payments to every existing health center to address rising numbers of uninsured patients and strained capacity. Since then, using this funding, **Health Centers have expanded care to 1.8 million new patients, and are on track to exceed their ARRA target growth, reaching nearly 3 million additional patients over the period of ARRA funding.**

Health Care Reform

During consideration of the health care reform bills last year, both the House and Senate included significant, mandatory funding increases for the Health Centers program. The House funding would enable health centers to serve an additional 25 million patients, while the Senate funding would enable an additional 20 million over the next five years. Such funding would establish the needed health care home infrastructure to support the reform effort.

The President's Budget

The President's FY2011 Budget proposes a \$290 million increase for the Health Centers program. This will allow Health Centers to continue to provide care to the 3 million patients added through ARRA funding by making Increased Demand for Services (IDS) and New Access Point (NAP) grants permanent. We strongly support the President's request to continue this funding. However, recognizing the essential role health centers play in ensuring health care access for all Americans, especially low-income, uninsured, publicly-insured and medically underserved individuals and given deep cutbacks in state and local funding, additional growth funding is urgently needed. There is also a need to keep the Federal Tort Claims fund solvent. Funding for health centers' FTCA has not changed for 5 straight years, and should be increased in light of program growth.

Our Position

Ensure the vitality of the Health Centers Program by supporting the new Health Center sites and patients made possible by ARRA funding and continue to grow the Health Centers program to reach more medically disenfranchised Americans. We urge Congress to:

- ◆ **Invest in the Growth of Health Centers.** Health Centers urge an increase of **\$370 million** in FY2011 in order:
 - To stabilize existing centers and new starts funded through ARRA (\$250 million);
 - To adequately fund the Federal Tort Claims Act fund (\$20 million); and,
 - To expand access to new communities, and bring high-quality **medical, dental, and behavioral health** care to **1 million new Health Center patients** (\$100 million).

House Members can cosign the letter led by Rep. Pallone, and Senators can cosign the Stabenow/Bond Letter. Health Centers ask that Appropriations Committee Members add a similar request to their personal request ("wish list") to the Committee Chairman.

- ◆ **Invest in the Growth of the National Health Service Corps.** Health Centers urge funding of **at least \$169 million for the NHSC in FY2011** in order to meet the growing workforce needs in underserved areas.