



July 20, 2026

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
House Energy & Commerce Committee
Chairman
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
House Energy & Commerce Committee
Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Morgan Griffith
House Energy & Commerce Committee
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette
House Energy & Commerce Committee
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Guthrie, Ranking Member Pallone, Chairman Griffith, and Ranking Member DeGette:

On behalf of the National Association of Community Health Centers, thank you for your ongoing support of Community Health Centers (CHCs) and your commitment to strengthening the nation's primary care infrastructure. I write today to express our support for the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute (AINS) to the Lower Costs, More Transparency Act (H.R.9393), which includes critical resources to expand behavioral health and nutrition services at CHCs.

For the past 55 years, the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) has been the leading national, nonpartisan organization dedicated to supporting CHCs (also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers), our committed 326,000 primary care workforce, and the 52 million patients we serve. For 60 years, CHCs have provided high-quality, affordable, comprehensive care – including primary, preventive, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, vision, and other essential health services at over 17,000 locations across rural and nonrural communities. This includes 1 in 3 rural residents and 1 in 2 in poverty. As our nation's largest primary care system, there is strong evidence, including from the Congressional Budget Office, that our work saves Medicaid and Medicare billions annually by reducing costly emergency, inpatient, and specialty care.¹ Research shows that every dollar invested in primary care yields a 13-to-1 return in overall health system savings.²

We appreciate the growing recognition of the critical role nutrition plays in preventing and managing chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease—

¹ Volerman A, Carlson B, Wan W, Murugesan M, Asfour N, Bolton J, Chin MH, Sripipatana A, Nocon RS. Utilization, quality, and spending for pediatric Medicaid enrollees with primary care in health centers vs non-health centers. *BMC Pediatr*. 2024 Feb 8;24(1):100. doi: 10.1186/s12887-024-04547-y. PMID: 38331758; PMCID: PMC10851548. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38331758/>

² <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/dsi-pcpcch/Documents/PCPCH-Program-Implementation-Report-Final-Sept-2016.pdf>

conditions that disproportionately impact the patients served by CHCs. The Nutrition Education and Chronic Disease Prevention in Community Health Centers Act (H.R. 9389) would strengthen CHCs' capacity to provide tailored nutrition counseling and workforce strategy, supporting their mission to deliver comprehensive preventive care. We are grateful that the language and \$250 million over two years in the AINS builds on this important legislation and makes significant investments to expand patient's access to nutrition services.

Additionally, we are grateful for the continued focus on improving access to behavioral health services, as originally advanced through the Expanding Community Access to Health Services Act (H.R. 8201). By strengthening the nation's behavioral health infrastructure through \$500 million over two years and ensuring CHCs have additional resources to provide better mental health and substance use disorder services as part of their core service offerings, this legislation represents a significant step forward in addressing growing behavioral health needs. The additional investment in the AINS will enable CHCs to build upon existing efforts, reduce persistent gaps in care, and expand access to critical behavioral health services for millions of patients.

Your leadership on nutrition and behavioral health, along with the efforts of Representatives Diana Harshbarger and Susie Lee to champion these priorities, is deeply appreciated. We urge the Committee to advance the Lower Costs, More Transparency Act with the provisions pertaining to CHC services as the bill moves through the legislative process. Enactment of these provisions will strengthen CHCs' ability to prevent and manage chronic disease, expand access to mental health and substance use disorder services, and improve health outcomes for millions of patients nationwide. We look forward to working with you and your staff to secure swift passage of this important legislation. Thank you again for your steadfast support of Community Health Centers and the communities they serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kyu Rhee".

Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP
President and Chief Executive Officer

CC: The Honorable Diana Harshbarger
The Honorable Susie Lee