



May 13, 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 and leadership, which have resulted in important investments for Community Health Centers (CHCs) in the recent Consolidated Appropriations Act. We appreciate your commitment to strengthening the nation's primary care.

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.<sup>1</sup> Research shows that every dollar invested in primary care yields a 13-to-1 return in overall health system savings.<sup>2</sup>

I write today to express our support for three public health bills impacting CHCs that were considered during the April 15<sup>th</sup> subcommittee hearing titled "Healthier America: Legislative Proposals to Improve Public Health." These bills will continue to strengthen access to

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<sup>1</sup> 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/>

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

comprehensive, community-based care and reinforce the essential role CHCs play in improving health outcomes nationwide.

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) deliver a full range of services—including routine check-ups, chronic disease management, behavioral health care, and dental and vision services—directly where students learn. This model, which represents one-quarter of all CHC sites, reduces barriers such as transportation challenges, limited clinic availability, and cost, ensuring that students receive timely care that supports both their health and academic success. Reauthorizing the School-Based Health Centers Grant Program is essential to continuing access for children and adolescents, particularly in communities facing persistent provider shortages.

We appreciate the growing recognition of the central role that nutrition plays in preventing and managing chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease—conditions that disproportionately affect the patients CHCs serve. Strengthening CHCs' capacity to provide tailored nutrition counseling and workforce training, as outlined in the Nutrition Education and Chronic Disease Prevention in Community Health Centers Act, is a cost-effective strategy that aligns with CHCs' mission to deliver comprehensive, preventive, and community-centered care.

Lastly, we are grateful for the Expanding Community Access to Health Services Act (HR 8201), which bolsters the nation's behavioral health infrastructure by requiring CHCs to be equipped with resources to offer mental health and substance use disorder services as part of their core service package. This legislation will enable CHCs to build on existing efforts and close care gaps that leave millions of CHC patients in need of behavioral health services.

We appreciate that the Subcommittee on Health will be considering the School-Based Health Centers Reauthorization Act of 2026 (HR 8209) later today. We look forward to working with the Committee on the other important bills as the process moves forward. Again, thank you for your steadfast support of CHCs.

Sincerely,

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

Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP  
President and Chief Executive Officer

CC: The Honorable Troy Balderson  
The Honorable Paul Tonko  
The Honorable Diana Harshbarger  
The Honorable Susie Lee