

*Health Center Funding Cliff
Talking Points
August 4, 2017*



Value of Community Health Centers

- Community Health Centers were founded by community health and civil rights activists who fought more than 50 years ago to improve the lives of Americans living in deep poverty and in desperate need of health care.
- Today, more than 1,200 community health centers serve the state of California, and provide comprehensive, high quality care to 6.2 million people – one out of every seven Californians.
- [INSERT TALKING POINT ABOUT THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS YOUR HEALTH CENTER SERVES]
- Community Health Centers provide the full spectrum of care, from primary care to dental to behavioral health care and a variety of enabling and wraparound services.
- Health centers' costs of care are among the lowest and their quality of care is among the best of any providers- and we work continuously to improve patient health, while saving taxpayer dollars. In fact, health centers save over \$1,200 per patient annually in total health care costs by coordinating and managing care thereby producing \$24 billion in annual health system savings.
- We are health care providers who are mission-driven, and we will continue to work tirelessly to bring community-based care to Californians regardless of their ability to pay.

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- With the support of both Democratic and Republican leaders, Health Centers have grown from a small demonstration project under President Johnson, to a fully authorized program under President Ford, to the centerpiece of a successful Presidential expansion initiative under President George W. Bush.
- As recently as December of 2014, Congress voted on a bipartisan basis to expand Health Centers, specifically requiring new sites and services – investments that require sustained support.
- Over the last 8 years, thousands of health centers nationwide have applied for resources to expand capacity, add a delivery site, or to add services like dentistry, behavioral health or vision care.
- A key source of funding for CCHCs is the Health Center Trust Fund, which is comprised of both annual discretionary and mandatory funding.
- The mandatory funding is currently scheduled to expire on September 30, 2017. If Congress does not take action, health centers will face an immediate 70 percent cut in funding, which may force health centers to close sites, eliminate services, and even lay off health care providers and staff.

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- California will lose over \$300 million dollars if the Congress does not reauthorize funding and hundreds of thousands of patients will lose access to care. A cut this massive will impact every health center, not just the newly funded and expanded.
- At our health center, failure to continue mandatory funding for health centers would (insert direct impact, i.e. hours, services cut, etc)
- Research has shown that 62 million people still lack regular access to a primary care provider. At our health center, we have new patients seeking our services, every day, evidence of why stable funding for health centers is vital.
- Without access to primary care, many people, including the chronically ill, delay seeking health care until they are seriously ill and require inpatient hospitalization or care at an emergency room at a much higher cost.

The Ask

- With future funding for this program facing uncertainty, we need your continued support to ensure that Health Centers can deliver access to care for our most vulnerable populations.
- Congress must act to sustain and stabilize Health Center funding on a long-term basis, with targeted investments in new services and capacity to meet increased demand and reduce uncertainty for patients.
- Would you consider weighing in with your colleagues and Congressional Leadership urging them to fix health center funding cliff?
- We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued support of the Health Center program.