**Rep/Sen. \_\_\_\_ Urges Continuation of Critical Community Health Center Funding**

Congress Races Against the Clock to Guarantee Access Health Care for 27 Million Americans at Community Health Centers

Today, Congressman \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ issued the following statement in response to the looming 70 percent funding cut for the Community Health Centers Program:

**Background:**

Community Health Centers face **a 70% cutback in program funding** if Congress does not act by September 30, 2017**. Community Health Centers currently** serve more than 27 million Americans, a number that continues to grow along with the demand for affordable primary care.

The Community Health Center Program is financed through a combination of discretionary funding passed by Congress in the annual appropriation process, and mandatory funding made available via the Community Health Center Fund created in 2010.

After initially providing $11 billion over five years for the operation, expansion, and construction of health centers throughout the nation, Congress extended the Community Health Center Fund in 2015 for two additional years (FY16 and FY17).**The extension of mandatory funding expires September 30, and would result in a 70% cut in program funding.** For fiscal year 2017, the nation’s health centers are funded with $1.4 billion from discretionary funds and $3.6 billion in mandatory funds.

Community Health Centers are one of the bright spots in America’s health care system, and serve more than 27 million Americans, a number that continues to grow along with the demand for affordable primary care.

They have compiled a significant record of success that includes:

* Producing $24 billion in annual health system savings;
* Reducing unnecessary hospitalizations and unnecessary visits to the emergency room;
* Treating patients for a fraction of the average cost of one emergency room visit;
* Maintaining patient satisfaction levels of nearly 100 percent;
* Serving more than one in six Medicaid beneficiaries for less than two percent of the national Medicaid budget.

Health centers continue to reach beyond the walls of conventional medicine to prevent illness and foster wellness, while addressing the factors that may cause sickness, such as lack of nutrition, mental illness, homelessness and opioid addiction. Their long record of success in innovating, lowering health care costs, and reducing chronic disease is a testament to their ability to provide high quality primary care to medically underserved populations.

**Democratic Member Statement**

“When millions of Americans nationwide [**including \_\_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ District** ] are in danger of losing access to health care, and 2,800 community health centers across the country risk closing their doors due to the inaction of Congress, there is a serious problem,” [**said Rep. \_\_\_\_\_**.] “Community Health Centers are a bipartisan, cost-effective, and a common sense bright spot in America’s health care system. I am hopeful that as the Congress returns from recess, we can quickly move forward to avoid a 70 percent funding cut for Community Health Centers, which care for 1 in 13 individuals around the nation and 1-in-6 Medicaid patients. Each day Congress doesn’t act before September 30 is another day that **[\_\_\_\_\_ patients served by Health Centers in the \_\_\_\_\_ ]** district move closer to losing access to affordable health care. It’s time for Congress to act.”

**Moderate Republican Member Statement**

[**Congressman \_\_\_\_\_** ] said, “Boosting our economy, improving access to health care and keeping jobs and revenue in [**rural areas/\_\_\_\_county/neighborhood**] is what I’ve been focused on since being elected to Congress. In countless frontier communities and urban neighborhoods, Community Health Centers are economic engines that provide a boost for economies that desperately in need of jobs and investment. Without swift action by Congress, Community Health Centers like the XX operating in my district will be forced to lay off almost 50,000 people nationwide, creating a ripple effect not only in terms of lost access to care, but undermining these small businesses that serve as community anchors. As September 30 quickly approaches, Congress must consider the impact a funding cliff has on jobs. A 70 percent cut to the Community Health Centers Program would absolutely throw a wet blanket on our economy, driving up health care costs and killing tens of thousands of jobs in some of our hardest-hit communities.

**Conservative Republican Member Statement**

For years, Community Health Centers in [**\_\_\_\_\_\_** ] and many other states have delivered quality, affordable health care to millions of individuals ‒ despite the near constant threat of a 70 percent funding cut. I place a premium on meeting the health care needs of people my district, and have seen the wonderful care provided at Community Health Centers all around [ **\_\_\_\_\_.**] It’s time for Congress to come together now to end the era of uncertainty for Community Health Centers,” said **[Congressman \_\_\_\_\_\_. ]**

“Providing long-term funding for Community Health Centers should be our priority here in Washington and immediately stopping this funding cut a great first step in that direction. I am glad to see President Trump has called for extending CHC funding in his budget, and that he’s surrounded himself with leaders, like Dr. Tom Price, who understand the critical role Community Health Centers play in our health system. Under their leadership, and with the efforts of this Congress, I look forward to finally ending the Washington ritual of passing last-minute funding for Community Health Centers.”