

Support Your Community Health Centers
Sending Office: Honorable Elise M. Stefanik
Support Your Community Health Centers
Deadline: Thursday, February 1, 2018

Dear Colleague:

Please join me in sending the following letter to Speaker Ryan urging him to reauthorize the Community Health Centers Fund (CHCF) as part of our work to fund the federal government by February 8.

Community health centers across the United States provide quality, affordable, and accessible primary health care to more than 27 million individuals in almost 10,000 rural and urban communities, regardless of patients' ability to pay. Community health centers bring together medical and behavioral health care with pharmacy and other services, making it easier for those they serve to get the care they need. They also serve our country's veterans and provided care to approximately 330,000 veterans in 2016 alone.

The CHCF accounts for 70 percent of community health centers' federal grant funding and we are very concerned about what will happen if this funding is not renewed immediately. Since CHCF expired at the end of September, community health centers across the country are having to make difficult choices to curtail their services and jeopardize patient care. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has estimated that without reauthorizing funding, about 2,800 health center sites would close, costing thousands of jobs and threatening the health care of millions.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please have your staff my office at 202-225-4611.

Sincerely,

Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress

February 1, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan,

We write to express our serious concerns over the expiration of the Community Health Centers Fund (CHCF), and to urge you to include a reauthorization of the fund as part of the next moving piece of legislation to be signed into law. We know you are a strong supporter of community health centers and we share your concern about the disruptions they are currently facing as a result of going over the so-called “funding cliff” at the end of September 2017.

Community health centers across the United States have delivered affordable, accessible, and quality primary health care to patients, regardless of their ability to pay, for more than 50 years. They serve more than 27 million individuals in almost 10,000 urban and rural communities by caring for the whole person, bringing together medical and behavioral health with pharmacy services. As part of this work, they provide preventive care and cancer screenings, treat chronic conditions, and are on the forefront of helping fight the opioid epidemic. They also serve our nation’s veterans, providing care to over 330,000 veterans last year alone.

The CHCF accounts for 70 percent of community health centers’ federal grant funding and the lapse in reauthorization has led community health centers across the country to consider or begin taking steps to reduce their services, jeopardizing the care of some of our nation’s most vulnerable citizens. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has estimated that without reauthorized funding, approximately 2,800 health center sites would close, costing more than 50,000 jobs and endangering the health care of about 9 million patients.

The Community Health Center program is a worthwhile federal investment we can all be proud of. Thank you for your efforts to ensure sustainable and reliable funding for this vital program so community health centers can continue to provide high quality, affordable care to those who need it most.

Sincerely,

Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress