



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations GUBERNATORIAL PROCLAMATION National Health Center Week

WHEREAS, for over 50 years, community health centers have provided high-quality, affordable health care in our nation's underserved communities, demonstrating that locally governed health care can improve lives while lowering costs; and

WHEREAS, what began as a small demonstration project in two states has grown into the country's largest primary care network, with Health Centers now serving as the health care home for over 24 million Americans through more than 9,000 delivery sites across the nation; and

WHEREAS, in Rhode Island about 152,000 Rhode Islanders (15% of Rhode Islanders) access primary health care at one of our nine local community health centers, with thirty locations throughout Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, health centers provide high-quality, cost-effective, and accessible primary and preventive care, including integrated medical, oral, vision, behavioral health, and pharmacy services, to all individuals regardless of insurance status or ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, health centers are located in medically underserved areas and locally controlled by patient-majority boards, ensuring that each Health Center always remains responsive to the needs of the specific community it serves; and

WHEREAS, the health center model continues to prove an effective means of reducing health care disparities and overcoming barriers to health care access, including geography, income and insurance status, and in doing so, improves health care outcomes and reduces health care system costs; and

WHEREAS, health centers save the entire health system approximately \$24 billion annually by managing chronic conditions and keeping patients out of costlier health care settings, like hospital emergency rooms; and

WHEREAS, National Health Center Week offers the opportunity to recognize America's Health Centers, their dedicated staff, board members, and all those responsible for their continued success and growth since the first health centers opened their doors more than 50 years ago. During this National Health Center Week, we celebrate the legacy of America's Health Centers and their vital role in shaping the future of America's health care system;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gina M. Raimondo, Governor of the State of Rhode Island, do hereby proclaim August 7 – August 13, 2016 as: *National Health Center Week* in the state and encourage all residents to recognize the importance of this week.

Given under my hand and the great seal
of the State of Rhode Island
and Providence Plantations,
this ____ day of August, 2016



A blue ink signature of Gina M. Raimondo, written in a cursive style.

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

A black ink signature of Nellie M. Gorbea, written in a cursive style.

Nellie M. Gorbea
Secretary of State