

2022 National Health Center Week Talking Points

Grateful for:

- Continued support for the mission and work of health centers
- Telehealth flexibility during PHE (Public Health Emergency)

To Sustain Innovative Care, please:

- **Protect 340B** – savings on prescription drugs enable us to offer expanded services to more patients.
- **Invest in Workforce** – health centers already had workforce challenges and now soaring salaries and signing bonuses are making that more challenging.
- **Pass long-term mandatory funding** – we must have guaranteed funds to sign contracts with providers, vendors, and facilities.

Why Pass Policies & Funding that sustain CHCs:

Community Health Centers make up the largest and most successful independent system of affordable health primary care in the nation

- Health centers serve over 30 million patients, including:
 - almost 400,000 veterans,
 - 9 million children, and
 - 1.3 million people experiencing homelessness.
- Nonprofit organizations that run more than 14,000 clinics in medically underserved communities across every state, U.S. territory, and District of Columbia.
- 42% percent of health centers are in rural communities where the nearest doctor or hospital can be more than 50 miles away.
- One in 11 Americans relies on these centers for health care.
 - 90% of patients are low-income.
 - 2/3 are members of racial or ethnic minority groups.

Health centers are drivers of health equity

- Health centers improve the health and well-being of underserved communities and empower people to actively take part in solving issues unique to them and communities.
- Health centers are innovators, healers, and problem solvers that reach beyond the walls of the conventional health care delivery system. They:
 - prevent illness
 - address the social drivers that may cause poor health – diet, nutrition, mental illness, or homelessness

- promote health equity - as with the fight against COVID-19 and other preventable diseases.
- Health centers work in partnership with health care payers, health care systems, the private sector, and all levels of government to address and respond to the critical public health crises of our time, including:
 - Pandemics
 - Natural disasters and extreme weather events
 - The national opioid crisis
 - Maternal mortality and more.

Health centers break down barriers to care

- Health centers quickly adapted because of the pandemic. They ramped up telehealth visits for everything from wellness checks and disease management to behavioral health services. Nearly all health centers now offer telehealth services.
- By mission and by law, health centers offer enabling services to help patients with specific barriers to care, including:
 - Transportation
 - Translation
 - Food security
 - Accessing other social services

Health centers are partners in rebuilding the economy

- To prevent COVID from shutting down our economy, health centers are:
 - testing, treating, and vaccinating America's essential workers -- people who work in factories, agricultural fields, or clean our public spaces.
 - Health centers produce over \$63 billion in economic activity in some of the most distressed communities.
 - Health centers employ 272,000 full-time equivalent employees, including many of our nation's veterans.