

We urge Congress to invest \$9B in Community Health Centers in Fiscal Year 2026

Including both Mandatory and Discretionary Funds

History: Health centers are mission driven

The Health Center Program is designed to ensure a comprehensive medical home for all patients, regardless of ability to pay. Community health centers (CHCs) are governed by a 51% consumer majority board, are key employers in their communities and have a proven track record of impact and success in fulfilling this mission for 60 years.

Reality: Health centers are in fiscal crisis

The cost of caring for patients, and the total number of patients, is expected to continue to increase dramatically. CHCs are facing enormous fiscal challenges: a severe health care workforce strains and shortage, expiring mandatory funding without a plan for a long-term reauthorization, the ongoing erosion of 340B program savings, diminishing budget margins, and increasing medical costs. As a result, budgets are on pace to be the lowest in years. They cannot continue to do more with less.

Community health centers are model stewards of federal funds, providing quality care to all who need it, regardless of ability to pay.

- For every \$1 invested in primary care like the care provided at health centers, \$13 is saved in downstream costs through the prevention of expensive complications and emergency room visits.
- For Medicaid patients, health centers save 24% per patient compared to other providers.
- For Medicare patients, costs for health centers are 10% lower than physician office patients and 30% lower than outpatient clinics.
- The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) notes that although it is not scorable, funding community health centers leads to more cost-effective patient care than the care that patients would otherwise receive and could save the federal government billions of dollars.

Unprecedented need requires bold action

Our FY 2026 Asks Include:

\$9B for combined mandatory and discretionary funding for Community Health Centers

- \$5.8B through the Community Health Center Fund, which must be reauthorized in 2025, and
- \$3.2B through the FY26 appropriations process

Meaningful Increases for Community Health Centers Workforce Programs:

- \$950M (mandatory) for the National Health Service Corps
- \$300M (mandatory) for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education program

How would this funding help community health centers fulfill their mission?



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1

Expand Access

Funding will enable ongoing and expanded access to care for people in rural and underserved communities, particularly as the country faces ongoing mental health, maternal mortality, and substance abuse crises. This care prevents care at more costly settings like emergency rooms.

2

Build Infrastructure

Capital and technology improvements help to expand new sites and access to care for patients and communities in need.

3

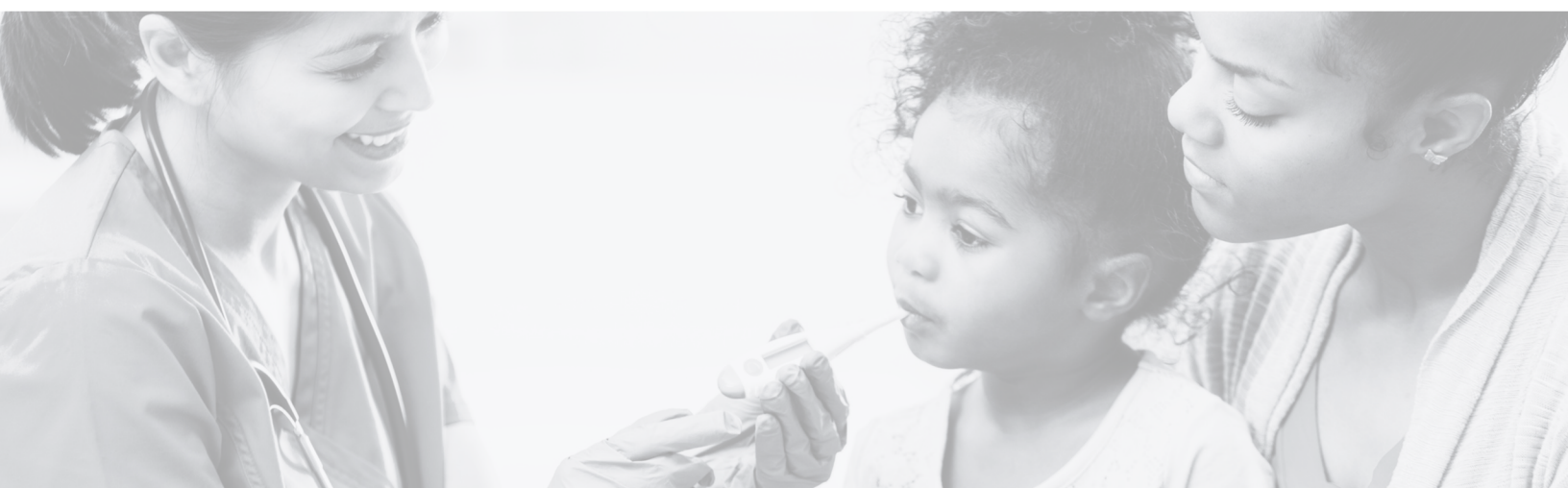
Grow Workforce

Investment allows health centers to recruit, retain, and invest in their workforce, from front office staff to clinicians. The head of the Health Resources & Services Administration testified recently that health centers currently are only able to meet 25% of patient mental health needs due to workforce shortages.

4

Allow Innovation

Health centers are masters of innovation to meet the needs of communities. Increased investment will allow health centers to innovate and expand things like telehealth and value based care to improve patient outcomes by addressing patients' unique and underlying health-related social needs



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