

Community Health Center Capital and Workforce Funding Talking Points September 2021

Ask: Congress should pass \$10 billion for Community Health Center (CHC) capital funding and \$6.3 billion for primary care workforce programs, as included in the House Energy and Commerce Committee version of the Build Back Better Act. This funding is critically important to **expanding and modernizing health center facilities and creating new opportunities for future health center clinicians.**

Investing in Community Health Centers facilitates primary care for millions of patients each year.

- Many health centers are operating at full capacity and have no more physical space to grow, offer additional programs and services, nor house staff. Federal funding is needed to build, renovate, and reconfigure health center facilities to meet the needs of their patients for additional medical, behavioral, and oral health services.
- This funding is even more critical to meet the needs of the **growing Medicare patient population that will be eligible for dental, vision, and hearing services under the Build Back Better Act.**
- According to a recent assessment by Capital Link, health centers will need **\$17.5 billion for improved facilities over the next five years** to meet the projected number of patients. **Nearly all (97%) health centers already have at least one capital project planned** to build, expand, or renovate their facilities to take care of patients.
- Specific projects may include building new exam rooms, pharmacies, dental practices, and group counseling rooms for maternal child health programs or behavioral health and substance use treatment. Funding could also enable health centers to expand capacity to provide additional onsite enabling services (such as case management, translation, transportation, health education).

Federal investment in the Primary Care Workforce is Critical.

- Chronic workforce shortages and growing salary gaps make it difficult for health centers to recruit and retain an integrated, multidisciplinary workforce to provide high-quality care.
- Investments in the nation's primary care workforce are needed to achieve the cost-savings the country needs and ensure health centers can keep pace with the growing and changing needs in their communities.

Community Health Centers create economic engines in rural and impoverished areas negatively impacted by COVID-19 job loss and financial insecurity.

- Health centers are an integral source of employment and economic activity in economically depressed communities. Community Health Centers create hundreds of thousands of jobs and infuse billions into the economy. In 2019, **health centers generated \$63.4 billion in economic activity and created 455,000 full-time jobs.**