

The Community Health Center and Primary Care Workforce Expansion Act

The Community Health Center Fund, a mandatory funding stream created in the Affordable Care Act, funds Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). The ACA also created the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education program (THCGME).

The ACA appropriated funds for these three programs for FY11-15 and MACRA extended funding for FY16-FY17. Funding expires on September 30, 2017. The ACA also included a 3-year Nurse Practitioner Residency Training demonstration for FQHCs and Nurse Managed Health Centers (NMHCs) that expired in 2015.

The Community Health Center and Primary Care Workforce Expansion Act would dramatically expand, and make permanent, these four programs that are vital to the health of millions of Americans.

Specifically, the legislation does the following:

- Increases funding for FQHCs from \$5.1 billion in FY18 to \$12.5 billion in FY27
 - Health centers will have the capacity to serve twice as many people by 2028, from 25 million today to 50 million – mirroring the goals set forth in the 2016 Democratic Platform.
- Significantly increases funding for the NHSC over ten years from \$850 million in FY18 to \$1.5 billion in FY27
 - Today, 59 million Americans live in designated primary care shortage areas, 97 million live in mental and behavioral health care shortage areas, and 47 million in dental health care shortage areas.
- Increases funding for THCGME from \$176 million in FY18 to \$260 million in FY27
 - Teaching Health Centers are in 27 states and 75 percent are FQHCs. Nearly 4 in 10 THC graduates – compared with 2 percent of traditional medical residents – become primary care providers in non-profit, community health centers in underserved communities.
- Provides robust funding for Nurse Practitioner Residency Training programs. Starting at \$35 million in FY18 increasing to \$80 million by FY27
 - A 2010 report from the Institute of Medicine on the future of the nursing workforce recommended implementing nursing residency training programs to ensure APNs had adequate training in community-based settings.
- Authorizes and appropriates over \$18 billion for capital projects to invest in the infrastructure and expand the physical capacity of the over 1,400 FQHCs in the United States
- Creates a formula to steadily increase and continue funding for every year after FY2027 to account for the growing need so these vital programs never again face the threat of a funding cliff.

Questions? Please call Senator Sanders' Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security staff at (202) 224-5480.