

## Talking Points on Health Center Funding Cliff for Conversations with Members of Congress

### ***Background: Access to Primary Care is Still a Pressing Issue***

- The demand for primary care – especially from the uninsured, underinsured, and those living in medically underserved rural and urban areas – far surpasses the nation’s available primary care capacity.
- Research has demonstrated that nationally **62 million people lack still lack regular access** to primary care services.
- Here at our health center, we see this everyday with new patients seeking care at our center.

### ***The Challenge: Health Centers Are Facing a Significant Funding Reduction***

- Health centers should continue to expand so that medically underserved patients have a cost-effective place to go for primary and preventive care.
- This means additional capacity at centers like ours but also expansions into communities that currently lack any primary care services.
- **Unfortunately, health centers are facing the expiration of mandatory Health Centers Fund after FY2015. Without a reauthorization of this mandatory funding, health centers like ours could face a cut to our grant of 70%.**
- The health center grant underpins the health center model, both stabilizing our finances and leveraging other resources. A significant cut to this funding would not only stop growth but actually lead to a massive **loss** of our *existing* capacity.
- This would lead directly to **closure of health center sites, layoffs of health center staff**, and most importantly, **a loss of access to care** for a huge number of our patients.
- This cut would be devastating for our community, but also for our larger health care system – leading to increased costs and less efficient care.

### ***Solution: Stabilize and Expand Health Center Grant Funding Through a 5-year Reauthorization***

- Health centers have demonstrated an ability to improve health, eliminate health disparities, and lower costs, saving more than \$1200 per patient per year.
- Investing in health centers generates meaningful primary care access in a cost-effective manner, while creating jobs and economic impact.
- **Congress must act to protect existing health center capacity and continue to expand health centers to meet the growing need. Health centers are seeking a 5-year continuation of our mandatory funding in order to develop the capacity to serve 35 million patients by 2020.**
- We are asking for your commitment to help us secure this critical reauthorization and ensure stability as health centers plan into the future.