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## New Funding this Year Work Begins for Next Year

*Tell your story about why health and housing funding are important*

The FY14 Omnibus Appropriations Act signed into law this month reversed some of the harm of the automatic sequester budget cuts and provided important funding increases (more information available [here](#)). Health centers are set to receive \$700 million in additional funds for this fiscal year, providing \$110 million in base grant adjustments and at least \$350 million for new access point and expanded services grants. These opportunities are exciting, **but the work to protect and expand these gains continues.**



To aid in our advocacy for the coming year, we are asking *Mobilizer* readers to contact the Council to tell us of success stories in your communities. **Real life examples are critical** to help public officials see beyond numbers on a page and understand the real good these programs do in your communities. Please take the time to contact [Dan Rabbitt](#) and **tell your story** on how federal programs such as health center grants or Medicaid have helped your project and the people it serves!

## TAKE ACTION

The debate this year over FY15 funding will begin shortly, with the President's Budget set for release on March 4. **Significant challenges are ahead**, such as identifying sources of health center funding after the ACA funds expire in September 2015 and expanding access to housing in tight budget times. The HCH community is strong and wide, but only if we make our stories known. **Please contact Dan Rabbitt by phone (443-703-1337) or [email](#)** with following:

- **Personal stories:** How have HCH services, outreach, housing programs, or Medicaid improved the life of a specific HCH consumer?
- **Expanded services:** Many HCH grantees have received new grants. What

new services, programs, and/or partnerships has this enabled?

- **Statistics:** How has federal support aided your community? How many additional people have been served? How many new jobs? How successful are your programs?

*Mobilizer* readers can help shape the debate by sharing these stories and we will be all the stronger as a result. Please contact Dan, tell your story, and get to know the National HCH Council's friendly neighborhood Health Policy Organizer. **We appreciate your help and look forward to hearing about the great work happening in your communities!**

## Background

The FY14 Omnibus Appropriations Act was recently signed into law, setting the funding levels for all discretionary programs for the current fiscal year (October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014). Programs had previously been operating under a continuing resolution passed to end the government shutdown last October. The Omnibus (meaning a collection of all the different appropriations bills into one bill) will provide some certainty to government programs that have been operating with little clarity regarding available funds for quite some time. Specific funding levels and further information can be found [here](#).

Health centers fared quite well this year due to the funds in the ACA (about \$2.1 billion). Health centers will receive even more funds from the ACA in FY15 (about \$3.5 billion), but this funding then abruptly stops after that year. This is what has been called the 'health center funding cliff' and would be disastrous if nothing is done to address it. The funding for health centers provided outside the ACA was only \$1.5 billion in FY14, so significant funding will be needed to replace the ACA funds and maintain health center operations. Now is not the time to panic, but a great deal of advocacy and education will be needed to convince policy makers to find a way to maintain and continue to expand the health center program after the ACA funds run out.

The FY15 appropriations process will formally begin with the submission of the President's Budget on March 4, 2014. The total amount of funding has already been set by prior legislation, so each program will need to demonstrate its value to maintain or expand the proportion of that total funding it deserves.

The stories and examples will be used by Council staff in their interactions with policy makers to demonstrate the importance of maintaining both health center funding and other important programs.

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