

## Increased Need Calls for Increased Capacity

*Contact your elected officials to support health center expansion*

The FY14 budget process is underway and members of Congress are submitting their funding priorities. **Health centers need to be one of these priorities.** Health centers must increase their capacity to serve millions of newly insured individuals in the next few years, while continuing to serve millions of uninsured persons. Sequestration and other budget cuts have already reduced planned health center growth, and further cuts must be averted. **Contact your Representatives today and ask that they support health center funding in FY14!**

### TAKE ACTION

A letter is being circulated in the House by Rep. Pallone (D-NJ) and Rep. Bilirakis (R-FL) voicing support for the health center program. The letter speaks to the cost-effectiveness of health centers and the need to expand into more medically underserved areas. See the letter [here](#). We need as many additional Representatives to sign the letter as possible. **The letter closes Wednesday, April 17** (it says April 10, but it has been extended to April 17).

**Contact your representative TODAY and urge them to sign onto the letter. You can call the Capitol Switchboard toll free at 1(877) 210-5351 to be connected to your representative in the House. The message you should convey is very simple: sign onto the Pallone-Bilirakis Health Center Letter.** Alternatively, you can [email your representative](#) by using the web form provided by our friends at the National Association of Community Health Centers. More information is available on the National HCH Council's [funding request](#), but conveying the simple message that you want your representative to sign onto the letter is all that is needed.

Please contact [Dan Rabbitt](#) to report your call or to ask any questions.

### Background

The FY13 appropriations process recently came to a close with the signing of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act. More information about FY13 funding can be found in the previous [Mobilizer](#). The Pallone-Bilirakis Letter is for FY14 (October 1, 2013 - September 30, 2014). It is what is commonly known as a 'Dear Colleague' letter, asking other members of Congress to support a particular initiative. In this case it is asking for support for the health center program.

No specific funding amount is included and instead it simply asks for 'support'. If health center funding is not reduced in FY14, health centers are set to receive \$1.6 billion in annual funding and \$2.2 billion in funding from the Affordable Care Act. This would be a \$700 million increase over FY13 (\$1.6 billion in annual; \$1.5 billion in ACA funding). Please note that these funding levels do not take into account sequestration cuts, which are difficult to calculate at this point. This funding level would allow for further base grant adjustments, New Access Points, and Expanded Services grants.

The FY14 appropriations process is only just beginning and several other opportunities to advocate for health centers will present themselves. Please view [Introduction to the Federal Budget Process](#) by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities for more detail and a timeline.

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