

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 18, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

We write to express our support for long-term funding of community health centers, which will expire on November 21, 2019. We strongly urge you to pass the bipartisan Community Health Investment, Modernization, and Excellence (CHIME) Act of 2019 to adequately fund the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF) for five years and provide certainty for these vital health care providers.

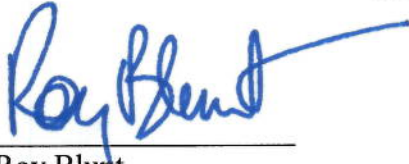
Community health centers provide affordable health care to our nation's most vulnerable citizens. More than 29 million patients, including 385,000 veterans and 8.7 million children, receive quality medical, dental, vision, and behavioral health care services from a community health center. These centers work to combat the opioid epidemic, offer preventive care to patients, and treat chronic conditions to improve the health of those they serve while saving taxpayer dollars. On average, health centers save over \$2,300 per Medicaid patient and save the health care system \$24 billion each year.

If the CHCF expires, community health centers will lose seventy percent of their federal grant funding. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, this would cause an estimated 2,400 site closures, 47,000 lost jobs, and threaten the health care of approximately 9 million Americans. As small businesses, community health centers must have certainty to best serve the needs of their communities and their patients. Some centers will soon have to take steps in anticipation of a funding lapse, including reducing staff and operating hours, cancelling capital projects, or even preparing to close their doors. If the CHCF expires next month, community health centers will be unable to plan for the future and continue to better the health of their communities. Additionally, the expiration of the National Health Service Corps and Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education program would harm the ability of health centers to meet their growing workforce needs.

Community health centers have maintained strong support from both sides of the aisle for over fifty years. Currently, twenty-eight bipartisan senators cosponsor the CHIME Act which extends funding for both community health centers and the National Health Service Corps.

We look forward to working with you to reach a bipartisan agreement to enact this legislation and ensure our community health centers continue to provide high quality and affordable care to those in need.

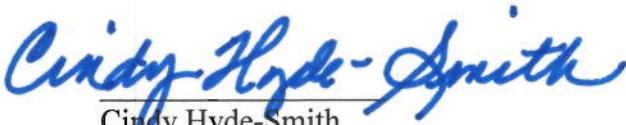
Sincere Regards,




Roy Blunt
United States Senator



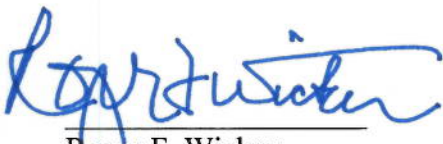
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



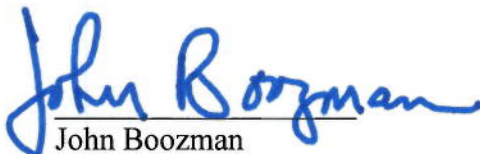
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Robert Portman
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



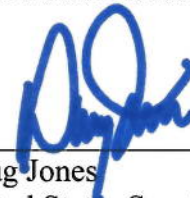
Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



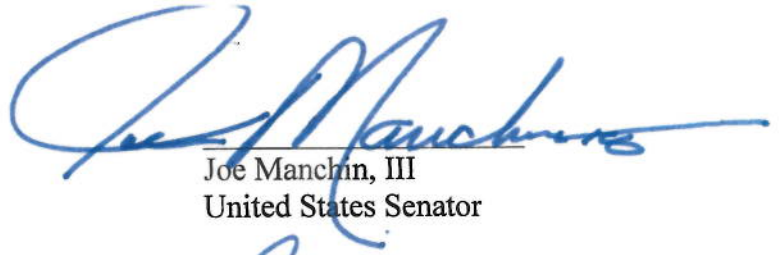
Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Doug Jones
United States Senator



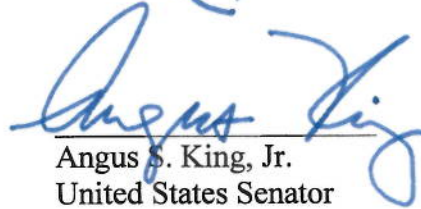
Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



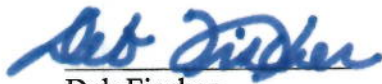
Joe Manchin, III
United States Senator



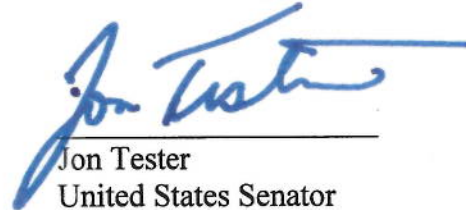
Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Deb Fischer
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Martha McSally
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator