



NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK PROCLAMATION

Celebrating America's Health Centers Transforming Health Care in Our Local Communities August 11-17, 2013

Whereas: America's community health centers are at the core of our health care system and the nation's safety net, delivering high quality, cost effective, and accessible primary and preventative care to all individuals regardless of their ability to pay.

Whereas: Health centers are located in medically underserved areas and locally-controlled by patient-majority boards, making each health center responsive to the needs of the individual community it serves.

Whereas: Currently, there are more than 1,200 health centers serving as health homes for more than 22 million individuals at more than 9,000 locations across the country.

Whereas: Health centers offer patient-focused, coordinated health care –preventive and primary care that families and individuals need, where and when they need it.

Whereas: Health centers employ more than 9,500 physicians and more than 6,300 nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and certified nurse midwives, along with social workers, case managers, and community health workers, as part of a multi-disciplinary clinical team designed to treat the whole patient, coordinating care and managing chronic disease, at the same time reducing unnecessary, avoidable and wasteful use of health resources.

Whereas: This health home model that health centers are at the fore of pioneering goes beyond primary medical care, providing behavioral health and dental services, along with case management and enabling services that ensure that care is provided in an efficient and timely manner.

Whereas: The Health center model has been proven to be an effective means of overcoming barriers to access for the medically underserved and in doing so, improving health care outcomes and reducing health care costs.

Whereas: This unique model allows health centers to save the entire health system approximately \$24 billion annually by keeping patients out of costlier health care settings, such as emergency rooms.

Whereas: As locally owned and operated small businesses, health centers also serve as critical economic engines helping to power local economies. In these difficult economic times, health centers are economic drivers in their communities. In 2009 alone, health centers generated \$20 billion in combined economic impact and were responsible for nearly 200,000 jobs in areas hit hardest by the recession.

Whereas: Last year, over 400 communities nationwide submitted applications seeking a health center, for an anticipated 25 awards, again demonstrating an overwhelming demand for access to comprehensive primary care across the nation.

Whereas: Today, 60 million Americans lack regular access to a primary care provider, even as the nation is preparing to provide health coverage for as many as 30 million Americans.

Whereas: Health centers are expected to become the health care home for many of these new patients but the demand for health centers continues to vastly outpace growth and many existing health centers are already at capacity.

Whereas: Health centers are committed to expanding to meet the needs of the communities they serve and to grow their reach to serve every individual who currently lacks regular access to a health care home.

Whereas: National Health Center Week offers the opportunity to recognize America's health centers, their staff, board members, and all those responsible for the continued success and growth of the program since its creation almost 50 years ago. During this National Health Center Week, we recognize the multitude of ways in which America's Health Centers are transforming care in local communities by delivering comprehensive, high quality, cost effective, and accessible health care.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Larry Zuzga Mayor of Laguna do hereby proclaim August 11-17, 2013, as National Health Center Week. I encourage every American to visit their local health center and celebrate the important partnership between America's Health Centers and the communities they serve.