

December 9, 2019

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

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

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, and the millions of Americans our organizations and programs serve, we write to **strongly urge you to take all necessary actions to prioritize long-term reauthorization of five vital healthcare and public health extenders that will expire on December 20, 2019**. We are grateful that all five of these vital programs were extended through December 20, and we appreciate the strong record of support both parties have shown for these programs. It is essential that we avoid expiration of the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF), the Special Diabetes Program (SDP), the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI), Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education (THCGME), and National Health Service Corps (NHSC) programs. Timely reauthorization will ensure that medical training, diabetes research, diabetes prevention programming in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities, and patients' continued access to health care services are not threatened or limited.

Avoiding disruption in funding is vital for Community Health Centers, which care for over 29 million patients in more than 12,000 rural and urban across the country. Similarly, the SDP provides critical funding for type 1 diabetes research, while the SDPI supports over 300 AI/AN diabetes prevention and treatment programs in 35 states. The SDPI has demonstrated success, contributing to a 54% reduction in rates of End Stage Renal Disease among AI/ANs. Also, the 56 Teaching Health Centers around the country have over 700 medical residents currently training to be primary care physicians while also providing healthcare services to an estimated one million patients annually in underserved rural and urban communities. And, the NHSC effectively places thousands of medical professionals in the highest need areas of our country so they can provide primary medical, dental and/or mental and behavioral health services in underserved communities.

While we appreciate the inclusion of the extenders into the current Continuing Resolution, we urge you to provide certainty and stability to these programs by making their timely and long-term renewal a high priority. These five programs play an indispensable role in our national health system, collectively reaching Americans in every congressional district and every state in the union. As such, guaranteeing timely funding for these programs is essential towards keeping communities across the country healthy and safe. Moreover, several of these programs also provide preventative health services, which help reduce future costly treatment expenditures for taxpayers under Medicaid and Medicare.

We strongly request that you prioritize long-term renewal of these five critical initiatives before December 20. As always, we stand ready to work with Congress in a bipartisan manner to ensure timely reauthorization of these successful healthcare and public health extenders.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Association of Diabetes Educators

American Diabetes Association

American Society of Nephrology

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Endocrine Society

JDRF

National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors

National Association of Community Health Centers

National Congress of American Indians

National Council of Urban Indian Health

National Indian Health Board

National Kidney Foundation

NephCure Kidney International

Organic Academia Association

Pediatric Endocrine Society

Physician Assistant Education Association

Trust for America's Health

cc: Hon. Lamar Alexander, Chair, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, U.S. Senate
Hon. Patty Murray, Ranking Member, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, U.S. Senate