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Access to Health Care in Jeopardy Due to Potential Federal Funding Cut to Health Centers Program

Michigan's 29 Federally Qualified Health Centers stand to lose over \$5.5 million in federal funding should Congress approve a proposed \$1.3 billion funding cut to the nation's Health Centers program for the remainder of fiscal year 2011.

Michigan's Federally Qualified Health Centers, also known as Community Health Centers, provide quality, comprehensive health care for nearly 600,000 Michigan residents at 170 delivery sites across the state. Their doors are open to all, regardless of insurance status or income level, making them a vital source of health care for Michigan residents hurting from loss of jobs, loss of income, and loss of health insurance.

Continued federal support is absolutely essential for Community Health Centers and the patients they serve. Should Congress reduce funding for the Health Centers program, it will be eliminating crucial access to primary and preventive care, the least expensive form of health care, for those who need it most. Nearly 70 percent of patients seen at Michigan's Community Health Centers have incomes that fall below the federal poverty line, and three-fourths are either insured by Medicaid or lack insurance completely. The number of uninsured patients at Michigan Health Centers grew by 38 percent from 2004 to 2009.

In addition to providing access to cost-effective, quality health care, Health Centers also generate economic activity for the communities in which they are located. Last year, Michigan Health Centers generated \$567 million in economic activity and they employed approximately 5,220 jobs in communities across the state.

Our state and our nation's health depend on expanding access to cost-effective primary and preventive care to more patients. Community Health Centers represent the rare chance to unite in consensus around a solution. With access to preventive medicine, people stay healthy and out of hospital emergency rooms, communities stay productive, and cost-savings are generated and passed on to all consumers and tax payers.

About Michigan Primary Care Association

Michigan Primary Care Association has been the voice for Community Health Centers and other community-based providers in Michigan since 1980. It is a leader in building a healthy society in which all residents have convenient and affordable access to quality health care. MPCA's mission is to promote, support, and develop comprehensive, accessible, and affordable quality community-based primary care services to everyone in Michigan. For more information, please visit www.mPCA.net or call 517.381.8000.

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