

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 25

Recognizing the value and benefits that community health centers provide as health care homes for over 18,000,000 individuals, and the importance of enabling health centers and other safety net providers to continue to offer accessible, affordable, and continuous care to their current patients and to every American who lacks access to preventive and primary care services.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 9, 2009

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the value and benefits that community health centers provide as health care homes for over 18,000,000 individuals, and the importance of enabling health centers and other safety net providers to continue to offer accessible, affordable, and continuous care to their current patients and to every American who lacks access to preventive and primary care services.

Whereas a strong system of health care safety net providers is vital to ensuring that any health care system address access, cost, and quality challenges while providing care for the most vulnerable individuals and communities;

Whereas community health centers currently form the backbone of the health care safety net for the United States, caring for more than 1 out of every 5 uninsured low-income Americans and providing almost 1 out of every 5 office visits under Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program;

Whereas more than 60,000,000 individuals in the United States are medically disenfranchised, lacking access to primary care services like those provided by health centers and other safety net providers, regardless of insurance coverage;

Whereas health centers effectively remove barriers to care by providing cost-effective, high-quality, and comprehensive preventive and primary health care, as well as effective care management for individuals with chronic conditions;

Whereas health centers have compiled a well-documented record of reducing health disparities and improving patient health outcomes, lowering the overall cost of care for their patients by 41 percent as compared to individuals who receive care elsewhere, and generating \$18,000,000,000 in savings each year for the health care system;

Whereas an expansion of the highly effective Health Centers Program to provide a health care home for all 60,000,000 medically disenfranchised Americans would increase the overall savings that health centers generate for the health care system to up to \$80,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas Congress has recognized the value of the care that health centers provide to those enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program by making

their services a guaranteed benefit and establishing a mechanism to appropriately reimburse health centers for the quality care that they provide;

Whereas private insurance often does not appropriately reimburse safety net providers like health centers for the full spectrum of care they provide, forcing health centers to subsidize under-payments for their privately insured patients by diverting funds intended to support care for those in need; and

Whereas millions of Americans in underserved communities are in need of a health care home like those provided by health centers, which serve as a proven model of health care delivery that assures high-quality and cost-effective health care in every State of the Nation: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) all individuals should have the choice of a
4 community health center as their health care home
5 and every health center should be appropriately re-
6 imbursed for the high-value preventive and primary
7 care they provide;

8 (2) health care reform should include measures
9 to expand community health centers in order to
10 reach more individuals who need a health care home;

11 (3) the current payment mechanisms for feder-
12 ally qualified health centers through Medicaid and
13 the Children’s Health Insurance Program are essen-

1 tial to ensuring access to affordable and high-quality
2 preventive and primary care services for beneficiaries
3 of such programs;

4 (4) any expansion of private insurance must in-
5 clude mechanisms to ensure the full participation of,
6 and appropriate reimbursement to, federally quali-
7 fied health centers and other safety net providers in
8 order to ensure adequate access to care for those in-
9 dividuals who are medically underserved or
10 disenfranchised; and

11 (5) ensuring access to all safety net providers,
12 including federally qualified health centers, will be
13 vital to ensuring that health care reform is success-
14 ful in expanding access, improving quality, and re-
15 ducing cost.

○