

# U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin: Working to extend long term funding for community health centers

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin joined a bipartisan group of 26 Senators urging Senate leaders to extend long-term funding for community health centers (CHCs). Senator Baldwin has been a strong advocate for reauthorizing funding for community health centers, including the 18 CHCs in Wisconsin.

In a bipartisan letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Senator Baldwin and her colleagues call for immediate passage of the [Community Health Investment, Modernization, and Excellence \(CHIME\) Act of 2019](#), which would reauthorize the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF) and the National Health Service Corps for five years. Funding for CHCs is set to expire on November 21, 2019.

*“Community health centers provide affordable health care to our nation’s most vulnerable citizens,” **the Senators wrote.** “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.”*

In addition to Senator Baldwin, the bipartisan letter was also signed by U.S. Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Roy Blunt (R-MO), Cory Gardner (R-CO), John Boozman (R-AR), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tom Carper (D-DE), Susan Collins (R-ME), Steve Daines (R-MT), Deb Fischer (R-NE), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS), Doug Jones (D-AL), Angus King (I-ME), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Martha McSally (R-AZ), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Gary Peters (D-MI), Rob Portman (R-OH), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), Jon Tester (D-MT), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Roger Wicker (R-MS).

The full text of the letter is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).