

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 65

Senators Wojno, Chang, Cherry, Geiss and Santana offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to recognize August 6-12, 2023, as National
2 Health Center Week.

3 Whereas, For over 50 years, community health centers have
4 provided high-quality, affordable, comprehensive, primary and
5 preventive health care in our nation's underserved communities,
6 delivering value to, and having a significant impact on, America's
7 health care system; and

8 Whereas, As the country's largest primary care network,
9 community health centers are the health care home for 30 million
10 Americans in over 14,000 communities across the nation. One in
11 every eleven people in the United States gets their care in a

1 community health center; and

2 Whereas, Community health centers are a critical element of
3 the health system, serving both rural and urban communities. They
4 often provide the only accessible and dependable source of primary
5 care in their communities. Nationwide, community health centers
6 serve one in every five residents of rural areas; and

7 Whereas, Community health centers serve as beacons of
8 essential resources and support in the face of disasters and
9 pandemics. They continue to respond quickly to care for America's
10 most vulnerable and underserved communities. To date, health
11 centers have administered over 22 million COVID-19 tests and over
12 24 million vaccines; and

13 Whereas, Every day, community health centers develop new
14 approaches to the integration of a wide range of services beyond
15 primary care including oral health, vision, behavioral health, and
16 pharmacy services in order to meet the needs and challenges of
17 their communities; and

18 Whereas, In the last decade, health centers have more than
19 doubled their behavioral health workforce to meet Americans'
20 growing need for behavioral health services; and

21 Whereas, Community health centers are governed by patient-
22 majority boards, ensuring that the patients of each health center
23 are engaged in their own health care decisions; and

24 Whereas, They are locally owned and operated small businesses
25 that serve as critical economic engines, helping to power local
26 economies by generating \$85 billion in economic activity in some of
27 the country's most economically-deprived communities; and

28 Whereas, Nationally, community health centers support more
29 than 500,000 direct and indirect jobs, including physicians, nurse

1 practitioners, physician assistants, licensed family therapists,
2 and certified nurse-midwives who work as part of multi-disciplinary
3 clinical teams designed to treat the whole patient; and

4 Whereas, The community health center model continues to prove
5 as an effective means of overcoming barriers to healthcare access,
6 including geography, income and insurance status, the improvement
7 of health care outcomes, and a reduction in health care system
8 costs; and

9 Whereas, Community health centers reduce overall costs of care
10 by helping manage chronic conditions, keeping patients out of
11 costlier health care settings like hospital emergency rooms; and

12 Whereas, Being on the front lines of emerging health care
13 crises, community health centers provide access to care for our
14 nation's veterans, addressing the opioid epidemic, and responding
15 to public health threats in the wake of natural disasters; and

16 Whereas, Almost 500 health centers operate close to 1,000
17 mobile units, providing health services in over hundreds of rural
18 and urban communities; and

19 Whereas, National Health Center Week offers the opportunity to
20 celebrate over 1,400 health center organizations in the United
21 States with over 14,000 service delivery sites, along with their
22 dedicated staff, board members, patients, and those responsible for
23 their continued success and growth; and

24 Whereas, During National Health Center Week, we honor the
25 legacy of America's community health centers and their vital role
26 in shaping the past, present, and future of our health care system;
27 now, therefore, be it

28 Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative
29 body recognize August 6-12, 2023, as National Health Center Week.

- 1 We encourage all Americans to participate by visiting their local
- 2 health center and celebrate the important partnership between
- 3 America's community health centers and the communities they serve.