

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

We write to thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving our nation's health care system. As COVID-19 continues to affect communities across America, it is even more essential that our health care providers have the funding and resources they need to care for vulnerable populations. Thus, we urge swift action and robust funding to preserve critical programs that provide Americans across the nation access to the highest quality and most affordable health care.

The Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program, Community Health Centers, National Health Service Corps, Special Diabetes Program, and Special Diabetes Program for Indians are essential programs that offer rural Americans and vulnerable populations essential care. The *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* reauthorized these programs until November 30, 2020, making an important first step to ensure every American has access to care during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

However, continued short-term authorizations leave health care providers and patients alike facing uncertainty as the expiration date looms. The absence of a long-term authorization undermines health care providers' ability to invest in purchases such as medical equipment and forces them to brace for significant layoffs of staff. Additionally, failure to reauthorize the programs before they expire would result in patients across the country facing reduced access to care, worsened health outcomes, and increased treatment costs. This uncertainty leaves vulnerable communities feeling the consequences.

Chronic diseases like diabetes are the chief driver of the country's \$3.5 trillion annual health care expenditure, and a leading cause of death for Americans. These programs provide crucial solutions by increasing access to life-saving care and supplementing the country's medical workforce. By providing high-quality, timely, and community-based care, these programs lower health care costs and improve health outcomes. For every dollar spent on primary care, the health care system saves \$13 due to reduced hospitalizations and effective disease management.

Funding uncertainty threatens to jeopardize these programs and the essential care they provide. We urge immediate action to approve a five-year reauthorization so that these critical

programs have robust funding and the stability necessary to achieve their mission of improving the health and well-being of all Americans.

Sincerely,



Xochitl Torres Small
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress

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