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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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

WHEREAS, As the country's largest primary care network, community health centers are the health care home for 30 million Americans in over 14,000 communities across the nation; one in every 12 people in the United States gets their care in a community health center; and

WHEREAS, Over 40 organizations in Illinois operate community health centers at over 400 sites in communities across the State, providing services for nearly 5,000,000 patient visits annually; and

WHEREAS, Community health centers are a critical element of the health system, serving both rural and urban communities and often providing the only accessible and dependable source of primary care in their communities; nationwide, community health centers serve one in every five residents of rural areas; and

1 WHEREAS, In Illinois, over one quarter of organizations
2 operating as community health centers serve rural patients;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Community health centers serve as beacons of
5 essential resources and support in testing and treatment in
6 the face of the global coronavirus pandemic and will continue
7 to offer reliable, affordable, high-quality care against
8 COVID-19 for America's most vulnerable and underserved
9 communities; and

10 WHEREAS, Every day, community health centers develop new
11 approaches to integrating a wide range of services beyond
12 primary care, including oral health, vision, behavioral
13 health, and pharmacy services, to meet the needs and
14 challenges of their communities; and

15 WHEREAS, Community health centers are governed by
16 patient-majority boards, ensuring that the patients of each
17 health center are engaged in their own health care decisions;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Community health centers are locally owned and
20 operated small businesses that serve as critical economic
21 engines, helping to power local economies by generating \$54.6
22 billion in economic activity in some of the country's most

1 economically-deprived communities; and

2 WHEREAS, Every dollar in investment in community health
3 centers in Illinois generates \$5.21 in economic activity, and
4 community health centers in Illinois generate over \$2.4
5 billion in total economic activity; and

6 WHEREAS, Nationally, community health centers employ more
7 than 236,000 people, including physicians, nurse
8 practitioners, physician assistants, and certified nurse
9 midwives who work as part of multi-disciplinary clinical teams
10 designed to treat the whole patient; and

11 WHEREAS, Community health centers in Illinois employ
12 nearly 10,000 health care professionals, including physicians,
13 physician assistants, nurse practitioners, dentists, dental
14 hygienists, behavioral health specialists, pharmacists, and
15 eye care specialists; and

16 WHEREAS, The community health center model continues to
17 prove an effective means of overcoming barriers to healthcare
18 access, including geography, income, and insurance status,
19 improving health care outcomes and reducing health care system
20 costs; and

21 WHEREAS, Community health centers reduce overall costs of

1 care by helping manage patients' chronic conditions, which
2 keeps them out of costlier health care settings like hospital
3 emergency rooms; and

4 WHEREAS, Community health centers are on the front lines
5 of emerging health care crises, providing access to care for
6 our nation's veterans, addressing the opioid epidemic, and
7 responding to public health threats in the wake of natural
8 disasters; and

9 WHEREAS, Community Health Center Week offers the
10 opportunity to celebrate America's over 1,400 health center
11 organizations with over 12,000 service delivery sites,
12 Illinois's over 40 health center organizations with over 400
13 service delivery sites, their dedicated staff, board members,
14 patients, and all those responsible for their continued
15 success and growth since the first health centers opened their
16 doors more than 50 years ago; and

17 WHEREAS, During Community Health Center Week, we celebrate
18 the legacy of America's community health centers and their
19 vital role in shaping the past, present, and future of
20 America's health care system; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
22 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that

1 we declare August 9-15, 2021 as Community Health Center Week
2 in the State of Illinois; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That we encourage all Americans to take part in
4 this week by visiting their local health center and
5 celebrating the important partnership between America's
6 community health centers and the communities they serve; and
7 be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we will work to ensure that every
9 underserved and under-resourced community shall have
10 sustainable access to a community health center and a
11 community hospital to address their health needs in an effort
12 to improve health outcomes; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
14 presented to the Illinois Primary Health Care Association and
15 the National Association of Community Health Centers.