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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE  
AND TRANSPORTATION  
CHAIRMAN, RULES AND  
ADMINISTRATION  
SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON INTELLIGENCE

March 17, 2015

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
Chairman  
Senate Finance Committee  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Senate Finance Committee  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden:

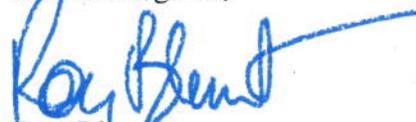
I write in support of Community Health Centers. Community Health Centers serve a vital function and help provide affordable care to as many as 62 million Americans who do not have access to primary care. They provide quality medical, dental, behavioral health care, and vision care to more than 23 million patients in over 9,000 communities.

In Missouri, Community Health Centers serve 450,000 people, 152,755 of which are uninsured. The cost of treating these individuals through Community Health Centers is \$156 per encounter as opposed to the average emergency room visit which costs \$2,168. In fact, studies have shown that Community Health Centers save Medicaid 30 percent on each beneficiary due to the reduction in inappropriate usage of emergency rooms and unnecessary hospitalizations.

Since Community Health Centers offer affordable care to the uninsured, they rely on federal resources to help offset the cost of care. If funding that Community Health Centers have relied on through the Health Centers Fund is not reauthorized, they will be facing a reduction in \$3.6 billion in federal funding, which the Appropriations Committee cannot address due to budgetary caps enacted in the Budget Control Act. This will result in over 2,000 Community Health Centers closing.

As the Senate Finance Committee considers legislation in the upcoming weeks addressing the Sustainable Growth Rate formula, I ask that you also include reauthorization of the Health Centers Fund.

Sincere Regards,



Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education  
Related Agencies