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LPCA Executive Director Releases Statement on Health Center Funding Extension

This week, just ahead of today's December 20 deadline, Congress signed off on a sweeping legislative package that funds the government and extends funding for the Health Center Program. This measure is expected to be signed by the President today. The bill, which touches on a variety of healthcare programs and taxes, includes \$1.6 billion in discretionary funding for Community Health Centers. There is also special language attached to this bill that will extend our mandatory funding (approximately \$4 billion) through May 22, 2020.

The Louisiana Primary Care Association, our state's Community Health Centers, and the 444,000 patients in their care are relieved that funding has been extended. While a short-term extension is better than no extension at all, we are still disappointed that Congress could not reach an agreement on long-term, multi-year funding. Like any other small businesses, Community Health Centers must be able to budget and plan for ongoing and future needs.

With this latest short-term extension (the third this year), Congress continues to kick the can down the road. Despite overwhelming bipartisan support, the Health Center Program is often held hostage and used as a bargaining chip when packaged with other, more contentious legislation.

We call on Congress to take action – and to do so well before the May 22nd deadline. As we enter a new year, our organization remains committed to working with our elected officials in order to secure long-term funding. Community Health Centers continue to deliver first class care to their patients. It is past time for Congress to offer them the support they deserve.

Gerrelde Davis
Executive Director
Louisiana Primary Care Association

About the Louisiana Primary Care Association

The Louisiana Primary Care Association (LPCA) represents 39 federally funded, private, non-profit and public Community Health Centers (and 3 Look-Alikes) across Louisiana that serve over 444,000 patients annually. LPCA promotes community-based health services through advocacy, education, and collaboration with community partners. Our goal is to ensure that every Louisianan has access to affordable, quality, primary care services. For more information, visit www.LPCA.net.