

Louisiana Primary Care Association, Inc.
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February 28, 2020

The Honorable Jeff Landry
Louisiana Attorney General
P.O. Box 94005
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: *Texas v. United States* Lawsuit Challenging the Affordable Care Act

Dear Attorney General Landry,

On behalf of Louisiana's 444,000 Community Health Center patients and their families, we urge you to reconsider your position in involving our state as a plaintiff in the *Texas v. United States* case challenging the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). A new report released in January from the Protecting Health Coverage in Louisiana Task Force indicates that if the law were to be thrown out, over 494,000 Louisianans could be at risk of losing access to health coverage. Many, if not most, of these individuals are patients of Community Health Centers who have benefited from Louisiana's implementation of Medicaid expansion. As Louisiana's largest network of community-based, patient centered primary care providers, we have serious concerns regarding the consequences of this lawsuit and the monumental impact it could have on the citizens of our state.

Louisiana's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), commonly referred to as Community Health Centers, provide primary care, oral, and behavioral health services to our state's most underserved and vulnerable populations. Health centers serve 55 of Louisiana's 64 parishes and are tasked with meeting the needs of both urban and rural communities. In 2018 alone, Louisiana's 39 FQHC organizations served over 444,000 patients, including 268,000 individuals who rely on Louisiana's Medicaid program for access to health coverage. We are deeply invested in the continuation and success of the ACA.

After ten years of Congressional opposition and endless court challenges – including a landmark 2012 Supreme Court decision – the ACA continues to serve as a political lightning rod. The fact remains that the ACA has proven to be a life-saver for millions of Americans across our country, especially here in Louisiana. The ACA has positively impacted our patients by protecting those with pre-existing conditions and even allowing children to stay on their parents' insurance plan until age 26. By allowing states to expand Medicaid eligibility, over 468,000 of our family members, friends, and neighbors now have affordable access to important preventive and primary care services.

Community Health Centers have also benefited. With new grants and resources dedicated to the Health Center Program, health centers have experienced unprecedented growth and expansion across the state. In fact, according to a study by The George Washington University, Louisiana experienced the highest patient growth rate in the nation from 2010-2016.

Our state is on the right track. More Louisianans than ever before are able to access affordable healthcare services. By throwing out the ACA without a suitable replacement, health care providers and patients will be thrown into uncertainty and back to the pre-2010 levels of uninsured and uncompensated care. While the ACA is critical for every state across the country, a poor state such as ours will feel the most devastating and wide ranging effects.

We admit the ACA has its flaws, but it nevertheless continues to serve as the foundation for a more equitable healthcare system that has been successful in reducing the rate of those who are uninsured. We acknowledge and even agree with your assertions that some parts of the law should be fixed and amended to more efficiently meet the needs of Louisianans. We will proudly stand with you as a partner in working to address your concerns in an effort to strengthen protections for consumers and patients. After all, we are in agreement that the health and well-being of Louisiana's citizens are of the utmost importance.

As Louisiana's Attorney General, we thank you for serving our great state. We appreciate the difficult decisions you are forced to consider on a daily basis. We have tremendous respect for the work your department has accomplished – especially your efforts in stemming Louisiana's opioid epidemic.

We would be proud to serve your department as a resource. Feel free to call upon the Louisiana Primary Care Association and Louisiana's Community Health Centers if we can be of assistance in future programs or collaborations.

Respectfully,



Gerrelda Davis
Executive Director



Mike Andry
LPCA Board President

cc: Governor John Bel Edwards
Interim LDH Secretary Stephen Russo