



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **OACHC Applauds the Senate's Support of the FQHC Primary Care Workforce Initiative**

*Ohio Senate invests in a program that teaches, inspires and puts to  
work our next generation of the primary care workforce*

(COLUMBUS) – The Ohio Association of Community Health Centers commends the Ohio Senate for their strong support of the FQHC Primary Care Workforce Initiative in the state's operating budget (HB 166).

"We applaud the Senate in recognizing that if we want to invest in our kids and families, beat the opioid epidemic, and reduce Ohio's abysmal rates of infant deaths, we need a strong foundation of primary care – medical, dental, and behavioral health – and we need to cultivate this strong foundation in our hardest hit communities," says Chief Operating Officer Julie DiRossi-King. "Community Health Centers and the patients and communities they so well serve thank the Ohio Senate for their leadership and continued support of this critical pipeline initiative."

"Furthermore, the combination of maintaining Medicaid coverage and supporting PCWI will allow Community Health Centers to invest in primary care capacity and increase access to care via a greater number of sites, expanded hours of operation and higher staffing levels in our most economically depressed communities."

"On behalf of the 800,000 Community Health Center patients and the nearly 3,000 students that have trained in Ohio's FQHCs, we appreciate the continued bipartisan and bicameral support for the investment in the next generation of primary care providers."

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services predicts a deficit of 1,200 primary care physicians by 2025. While some progress is being made, there is a growing shortage of clinical sites in the community in which to train primary care students. The PCWI program introduces primary care students (medical and dental students, APNs, PAs, and behavioral health) to the advanced Patient Centered Medical Homes (PCMH) model of practice for their clinical rotations at Community Health Centers across the state.

"A strong primary care workforce is a necessary component of the successful healthcare transformation that Ohio so critically needs," adds Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ted Wymyslo, "We know that students who are not exposed to advanced primary care models delivered in its communities of need will neither consider primary care as a career path nor consider practicing in underserved areas upon completion of their training."

**About Ohio's Community Health Centers**

Federally Qualified Health Centers and FQHC Look-Alikes, more commonly referred to as Community Health Centers (CHCs), are non-profit health care providers that deliver affordable, high-quality and comprehensive primary care to medically underserved populations, regardless of insurance status. CHCs provide integrated whole person care, oftentimes providing onsite dental, behavioral, pharmacy, vision and other needed supplemental services under one roof. While each is distinct, they share one common purpose: to provide primary health care services that are coordinated, culturally and linguistically competent and community directed.

**About OACHC | [www.ohiochc.org](http://www.ohiochc.org)**

OACHC is a not-for-profit professional association representing Ohio's Federally Qualified Health Centers. OACHC's Mission is to ensure access to high-quality affordable health care for all Ohioans through the growth and development of Ohio's Community Health Centers. OACHC represents Ohio's 55 Community Health Centers at 345+ locations, including multiple mobile units, in 69 of Ohio's 88 counties.

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