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Senator Susan Collins Champions Community Health Centers in Federal Economic Stimulus Package

Thanks in large part to Maine Senator Susan Collins, \$1.87 billion in assistance for Community Health Centers is included in the Senate version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

“We can’t thank Senator Collins enough for her efforts on community health centers’ behalf,” said Kevin Lewis, Executive Director of the Maine Primary Care Association. “Her commitment to ensuring access to quality, affordable health care services for all Maine residents and communities is evident through her work on this bill. I believe Maine is well-positioned to benefit from this provision of the federal economic stimulus package under development. These funds hold the promise of putting people to work and investing in crucial infrastructure so necessary for health care access, particularly in tough economic times.”

This provision will provide grants to Community Health Centers for construction, renovation, and equipment. Investing in infrastructure projects in Community Health Centers will help them upgrade or replace aging facilities and equipment, while also creating thousands of new jobs in communities across Maine and the nation. The U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that every \$1 billion in federal infrastructure spending could create more than 40,000 new jobs.

Dan Hawkins, Policy Director for the National Association of Community Health Centers stated, “We are tremendously grateful for the early and strong leadership shown by Senator Collins on behalf of health centers across the country. The bipartisan letter she authored in the Senate requesting construction funding for health centers has led directly to the \$1.87 billion provision in the Senate’s stimulus package. We look forward to working with Senator Collins to make this funding a reality in the days ahead.”

The underserved and uninsured in Maine are served by nineteen federally qualified health centers through delivery sites in over sixty Maine communities. In 2007, these health centers provided primary health care, dental care, and mental health services to 158,377 individuals through 699,060 visits.

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