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**DEVAL L. PATRICK**  
GOVERNOR

**TIMOTHY P. MURRAY**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

September 22, 2011

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Jack Lew  
Director  
U.S. Office of Management and  
Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Madam Secretary and Director Lew:

Access to a regular, comprehensive, and culturally-competent medical home that is affordable for patients and cost-effective for government is a defining characteristic of a successful health reform effort. Massachusetts has made great strides toward meeting this goal and our community network of community health centers has been key to that success. Fortunately, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) recognized the need for access along with coverage and offers a clear pathway for achieving it: the guaranteed expansion of community health centers. Protecting this expansion is absolutely vital to the ACA's success.

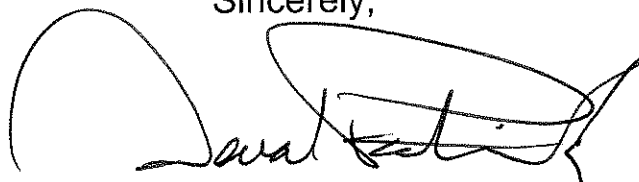
The dedicated \$11 billion Health Center Fund in ACA set health centers on a path to double their patients to 40 million by 2015. This was an essential down payment on the primary care access the nation will need to make reform a success, helping to ensure that the newly insured—amongst them 16 million new Medicaid patients—will have a place to go for care other than the emergency room. Unfortunately, as you are aware, the FY2011 omnibus contained a \$600 million cut to Health Centers program base funding. It is my understanding that this will mean that out of 800

applications submitted for new health centers, only 67 awards can be made this year whereas the Administration had planned to make 350 awards. In addition, of the nearly 1200 pending applications for existing health center expansions, none will be made at this time.

I recently sent the attached letter to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees wherein I urged Committee leadership to restore \$200 million of the Community Health Center funding reduction as they begin to debate FY2012 funding. A restoration of \$200 million, coupled with ACA's \$200 million increase in FY2012, would provide \$400 million in FY2012 expansion funding, allowing 200 new health centers nationwide to be opened and a significant expansion at most existing centers.

In Massachusetts, we have come to recognize that coverage and access are inextricably linked: one without the other falls short of the vision we all share for the health of our nation. The Affordable Care Act has the foresight to acknowledge this lesson—directly investing in the proven and cost-effective health center model of care. In these challenging times, you have many difficult decisions to make, but I urge you to stand firm in ACA's commitment to true health care access and fight to preserve the health center expansion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Keating". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "K".

cc: Massachusetts Congressional Delegation  
Valerie Jarrett, Senior Advisor, Office of the President of the United States of America  
Melody Barnes, Director of the Domestic Policy Council, Office of the President of the United States of America