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## Hawai'i Primary Care Association HEALTH CENTER WORKFORCE

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Across the country, there is a growing shortage of primary care physicians. Hawai'i is no exception, and is seeing an alarming misalignment between growing rural communities and shrinking numbers of clinicians. Community health centers nationwide are typically at a disadvantage in recruiting clinicians, but Hawai'i's CHCs also have to deal with the extremely high cost of housing when competing for health professionals. Several federal programs could help meet these needs, but they need reauthorization and increased funding to do so.

### Please:

- ❖ Reauthorize NHSC (S. 941/H.R. 4205)
- ❖ Increase NHSC funding to \$150 million in FY 2009.
- ❖ Increase funding for Title VII and Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act to \$550 million (of this AHECs should get at least \$30 million).

### National Health Service Corps

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) provides scholarships and loan repayment to those studying to be physicians, nurse practitioners, dentists, and other clinicians who agree to work in underserved areas. It is an essential recruitment and retention tool of Community Health Centers. This program needs to have its funding levels and authority increased to help solve increasing CHC needs. In Hawai'i, many Community Health Centers have provider vacancies, including in the Chief Medical Officers for Community Clinic of Maui, Hāna Community Health Center, Kalihi-Pālama Health Center, Lāna'i Community Health Center, Moloka'i Community Health Center, and West Hawai'i Community Health Center.

### Health Professions Funding

Other programs that are imperative to stimulating community-based primary care and keeping clinicians at Community Health Center workforce are those covered under Title VII and VIII of Public Health Service Act They include:

- Area Health Education Centers (AHECs);
- Health Education and Training Centers;
- Geriatric Education and Training Programs;
- Quentin N. Burdick Program for Rural Interdisciplinary Training;
- Entities engaged in education and training for the allied health professions and other disciplines; and
- Nursing student recruitment and training.