

## Raising a Question at a Townhall: Medicaid, Deficit Reduction, and Health Centers

### What to Expect

Your Member will stand or sit in front of a gathering of community residents in a group setting. Your Member will likely deliver prepared remarks and then take questions from the audience. Make it clear you have a question and when called on, deliver your remarks respectfully, beginning by thanking your Member for calling on you and for representing you, your health center, and your patients. **Your goal is to get called on, to have your Member (or their staff) remember you as a respectful and engaged voter, and to have him/her take your message back to DC.**

### What to Say

#### **BACKGROUND:**

- I understand that negotiations on a deficit reduction package are underway and I recognize how important this is for the country. I am concerned to hear that reductions to Medicaid could be a part of the discussion.
- My community health center [name of CHC] in [name of community] provides high quality, cost-effective care to everyone who walks through our doors-[xxx] patients last year. Together with health centers across the country, we save the health care system \$24 billion a year. Health centers work- and want to keep working.
- Medicaid is the single largest source of health center revenue, however. Significant reductions in funding to the states for Medicaid patients could undermine our model of care and threaten our organization's financial viability.

#### **QUESTION:**

- *For a known supporter of Medicaid:* We appreciate your support, and we understand the challenges you face in DC are great. Can we count on you to make sure that as reductions to Medicaid are considered, you'll fight to make sure health centers' ability to continue providing cost-effective care in our community remains intact?
- OR**
- *For a Member who opposes/is unknown on Medicaid:* We understand the challenges you face and we stand as your partner in bringing down costs in the health care system. We will continue to work tirelessly here at home, can we count on you, as things unfold in Washington, including possible cuts to Medicaid, to communicate with your colleagues and leadership about the importance of not undermining the successful Health Centers Program?