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Distinguished Community Health Center Awards Presented to NH Senators Ayotte and Shaheen

WASHINGTON, DC – March 21, 2013 – Directors from [NH Community Health Centers](#) and [Bi-State Primary Care Association](#) joined thousands of other health center leaders from across the country today to meet with their Members of Congress and key Congressional staff on Capitol Hill. They all carried a similar message: Community Health Centers stand ready to meet the demand for primary care services. They encouraged Congress to release all the funds allocated under the Affordable Care Act now to enable Community Health Centers to expand access to primary medical, dental, and behavioral health care, as well as pharmacy services, to millions of people nationwide in the years ahead.

The Community Health Center executive directors, board members, and medical directors from New Hampshire held meetings in the offices of Senators Kelly Ayotte and Jeanne Shaheen, and Representatives Ann McLane Kuster and Carol Shea Porter. Lead by Tess Stack Kuenning, executive director of Bi-State Primary Care Association, they echoed [testimony](#) Kuenning gave to the Senate Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging earlier this year: “Alone, the expansion of public and private insurance to 30 million Americans doesn’t ensure access to health care,” she said. “It is access that makes coverage real.” The Affordable Care Act includes investment in Community Health Centers. The nonprofit Community Health Centers provide access to primary and preventive care, with targeted outreach to underserved populations. Community Health Centers accept all patients regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay and save the health care system \$24 billion annually: \$1,263 per person, per year, by offering an open door to patients that might otherwise use more costly care, including emergency rooms.

In recognition of their past and current support of Community Health Centers, Kuenning presented Senators Shaheen and Ayotte with the Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award from the National Association of Community Health Centers.

Established in 1986, Bi-State Primary Care Association is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c) 3 charitable organization. With offices in Bow, New Hampshire, and Montpelier, Vermont, Bi-State works with federal, state, and regional health policy organizations, foundations, and payers to develop strategies, policies, and programs that provide and support community-based primary and preventive health care services in medically underserved areas.

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