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November 25, 2014

Kae Brickerd, Ph.D., MPH
Chief, Shortage Designation Branch (Room 11W14)
Division of Policy and Shortage Designation
Bureau of Health Workforce
Health Resources and Services Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 11SWH03
Rockville, MD 20857

RE: MUP Designation - Carroll County, Maryland

Dear Dr. Brickerd:

I am writing to reiterate my strong support for the Governor's request for an Exceptional Medically Underserved Population (MUP) designation in Carroll County, Maryland. I appreciate the continued work of HRSA's Office of Shortage Designation with the Primary Care Office (PCO) in the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and urge favorable consideration of this request.

I am proud to represent Maryland's Eighth Congressional District, which includes parts of Carroll County and is home to Access Carroll, a free clinic providing primary care to thousands of uninsured and low-income residents since 2005. Almost two years ago, I visited Access Carroll, met with the leadership and staff, and began a dialogue about pursuing Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) status. In August 2013, I provided a letter of support for the original shortage designation applications for Middleburg and Downtown Westminster submitted by the PCO.

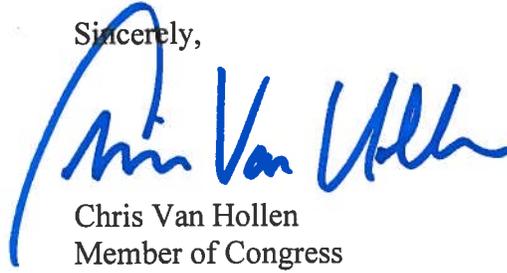
As detailed in the request for an Exceptional MUP designation, Carroll County performs below the state average on seven State Health Improvement Plan measures, including emergency department visits due to mental health conditions, mortality rates from heart disease and cancer, utilization of tobacco products, and pediatric dental care. The Partnership for a Healthier Carroll County, Inc. has also determined areas for health improvement including obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and lack of exercise. Finally, the request describes transportation barriers to accessing health care such as lack of private transportation and limited public transit in the County.

As you know, Maryland is among the 27 states and the District of Columbia that chose to expand Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act. I have heard from my constituents that Medicaid recipients in Carroll County have had difficulty finding providers willing to accept

their plans, serve the newly insured, or offer the case management services many of these patients need. The success of the Medicaid expansion requires action at the federal and state levels, including supporting FQHCs, in order to ensure sufficient provider participation in the program.

An Exceptional MUP designation is the first step for Access Carroll to becoming a FQHC, accessing resources for long-term sustainability, and expanding health care across the County. Once again, I support the State's request and urge a swift and favorable decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Van Hollen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "H".

Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress