



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

November 8, 2011

The Honorable Bill Cassidy, M.D.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Cassidy:

Thank you for your letter regarding the lack of awards issued to organizations in Louisiana for the fiscal year (FY) 2011 Health Center New Access Point (NAP) funding opportunity. I appreciate hearing from you, and I welcome the opportunity to provide additional details on the NAP awards and other Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) Health Center Program funding opportunities available to organizations in Louisiana.

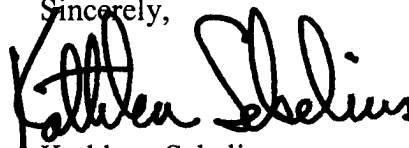
The funding opportunity for this round of NAP grants was extremely competitive, with funding awarded to 67 of the 810 applicants. The cut-off score for successful community health center applications was 102 out of a potential 120 points. Unfortunately, no organizations in Louisiana scored at or above the cut-off score, and as a result, no Louisiana organizations received funding.

As you may be aware, HRSA awarded funding to Louisiana organizations through other funding opportunities in FY 2011, including 14 School-Based Health Center Capital Grants, 5 Beacon Community Health Center Grants, 2 Health Center Planning Grants, and 20 Health Center Quality Improvement and Patient Centered Medical Home Grants.

I encourage health centers in Louisiana that currently do not receive a Health Center Program grant to consider designation under the Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike Program, which offers many of the same benefits as the Health Center Program. Additional information about this program, including instructions for applications, can be found online at <http://www.bphc.hrsa.gov/about/lookalike/index.html>. Louisiana health centers are also encouraged to contact the Louisiana Primary Care Association (PCA) and the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) for assistance with future application development. The PCA can be reached at 225- 927-7662 or www.lpca@lpca.net. NACHC can be reached at 301-347-0400 or www.nachc.com.

I appreciate your support of the Health Center Program and your commitment to underserved populations in Louisiana. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact Ms. Tonya Bowers, Director of the Office of Policy and Program Development, Bureau of Primary Health Care at HRSA, at (301) 594-4300. You are also always welcome to follow-up with me directly. A similar response is being provided to those who cosigned your letter.

Sincerely,


Kathleen Sebelius

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

August 25, 2011

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

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

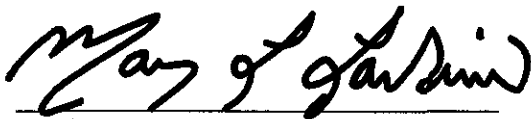
As you know, the Health Resources and Services Administration recently announced the winners of the New Access Point (NAP) grant. We are very concerned that not a single applicant from Louisiana was chosen to receive the award, despite the demonstrated competency of many of the applicants and the clearly established need for community health services throughout our state.

In rural and urban areas alike, Louisiana's community health centers provide a medical home to those who would not otherwise be able to receive quality, affordable health care. Louisiana currently has 24 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) with 75 sites throughout the state. These FQHCs are a vital component of our health care system in Louisiana, and significantly benefit from the enhanced reimbursement, Federal tort claims protection, drug price discounts, and other benefits the FQHC designation provides.

However, we need more, and unfortunately, the absence of additional NAP grantees in our state leaves many of our non-FQHC health centers without the resources they need to meet the needs of their community. Louisiana has the second-lowest overall health status in the country. We have a high rate of diabetes, preventable hospitalizations, and deaths resulting from cancer and cardiovascular disease. While it is good news that these statistics can be improved when patients receive the full dose of comprehensive primary care and other health services, it is regrettable that our state did not receive a single NAP grant to help fund an expansion of care.

I urge you to consider the pressing need for additional NAP awards that Louisiana health centers have, and to work closely with the NAP grant applicants in our state so that they may be more successful in the next round of award announcements.

Sincerely,



MARY L. LANDRIEU
United States Senator



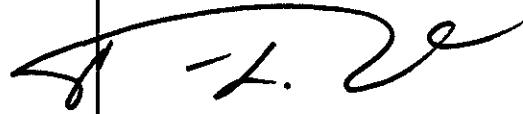
CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, M.D.
United States Representative

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BILL CASSIDY, M.D.
United States Representative



CEDRIC RICHMOND
United States Representative