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L.B. health center to receive \$1.3M grant

Obama and Pallone announce release of funds from Economic Recovery Package

Acting to strengthen the health care safety net for the growing number of Americans in need, President Barack Obama and U.S. Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (DN. J.) announced this week the release of \$1.3 million authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that will support the Monmouth Family Health Center in Long Branch.

Earlier this year, Pallone, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health, worked to have funding included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for community health centers.

Both Pallone and the Monmouth Family Health Center have been working to secure a federal grant for about two years, according to a press release from Pallone's office.

"Today, we are seeing how the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will help thousands of families here in Monmouth County," Pallone said. "The Monmouth Family Health Center provides essential preventive and primary health care services to those most in need of assistance, including many with no health insurance.

"I commend the Obama administration for approving this grant quickly so that it can be put to good use on behalf of New Jersey families hit hard by the economic recession," Pallone added.

Nationwide, grants totaling \$155 million will assist 126 health centers and help provide health care to an estimated 750,000 low-income people across the country, according to the release.

The grants, which are administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), are expected to create 5,500 jobs at the new health centers across the country, according to the release.

"We have acted quickly to put Recovery Act dollars to good use in communities across America," President Obama said in Pallone's release. "The construction and expansion of health centers will help create thousands of new jobs and provide critical assistance to Americans who have lost their job and their health care.

"Health centers, primary care, and prevention are at the heart of my plan for an affordable, accessible health care system," Obama said.

Executive Director of the Monmouth Family Health Center Marta Silverberg added, "Monmouth Family Health Center plans to utilize these grant dollars to expand services to the uninsured and underinsured in Long Branch and surrounding communities, as well as for those patients who have lost their health care coverage due to job loss.

"On behalf of MFHC employees, Board and the residents of Long Branch, we want to thank Mr. Pallone and his staff for helping us achieve our mission," Silverberg said.

HRSA's network of 1,100 health center grantees across the nation provide health care at more than 7,000 sites, ranging from large medical facilities to clinics and mobile vans. In

2007, health centers served 16.1 million patients, regardless of their ability to pay.

Charges for services are set according to income, and only nominal fees are collected from the poorest patients. Nationally, about 39 percent of health center patients have no health insurance, according to the release.

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