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**MEDIA CONTACTS:**  
**Melissa Kadish, GW (202) 994-8874**  
**Feygele Jacobs, RCHN (212) 246-1122 ext 712**

## **Health centers serve 2.7 million low-income uninsured workers, an estimated 1 in 4**

**WASHINGTON and NEW YORK** - A new policy research brief released today by the Geiger Gibson/RCHN Community Health Foundation Research Collaborative at The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services evaluates the consequences of the proposed reductions in federal health center funding on access to health care for low-income workers.

The brief, titled “The Role of Community Health Centers in Addressing the Needs of Uninsured Low-income Workers: Implications of Proposed Federal Funding Reductions,” estimates that of the 11 million uninsured, working, low-income Americans, 2.7 million receive their care in community health centers. The \$1.3 billion reduction in FY 2011 health center funding approved by the U.S. House of Representatives on February 20, 2011 would adversely affect health center expansion, threatening access to primary care for millions of America’s low-income workers.

“Health centers are a critical source of care for many of the most vulnerable members of America’s labor force,” said Sara Rosenbaum, Hirsh Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Policy and co-author of the study. “In many urban and rural communities, reducing health center capacity can be expected to significantly affect worker productivity in the local economy.”

Because of their location and emphasis on comprehensive patient-centered health care, community health centers have had a positive impact on health outcomes, while also reducing costs. Budget reductions that would impede the continued expansion of health center services can be expected to adversely affect all medically underserved populations, including the low-income workforce. Although the spending bill was rejected by the U.S. Senate on March 10, 2011, final measures for health centers are yet to be determined.

“Community health centers play an important role in caring for the working poor and their families, and address a pressing need” said Julio Bellber, president and CEO of the RCHN Community Health Foundation. “Cuts to health center funding will leave our low-income workers with few options for care.”

To access the policy research brief, click here:

[http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/dhp\\_publications/pub\\_uploads/dhpPublication\\_B5E2CD0C-5056-9D20-3DC9B0C6B7EA7DE3.pdf](http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/dhp_publications/pub_uploads/dhpPublication_B5E2CD0C-5056-9D20-3DC9B0C6B7EA7DE3.pdf)

### **About the Geiger Gibson / RCHN Community Health Foundation Research Collaborative**

The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy, established in 2003 and named after human rights and health center pioneers Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, is part of the School of Public Health and Health Services at The George Washington University. It focuses on the history and contributions of health centers and the major policy issues that affect health centers, their communities, and the patients that they serve.

The RCHN Community Health Foundation, founded in October 2005, is a not-for-profit foundation whose mission is to support community health centers through strategic investment, outreach, education, and cutting-edge health policy research. The only foundation in the country dedicated to community health centers, the Foundation builds on health centers' 40-year commitment to the provision of accessible, high quality, community-based healthcare services for underserved and medically vulnerable populations. The Foundation's gift to the Geiger Gibson program supports health center research and scholarship.

Additional information about the Research Collaborative can be found online at [gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/ggprogram](http://gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/ggprogram) or at [rchnfoundation.org](http://rchnfoundation.org).

### **About The George Washington University Medical Center**

The George Washington University Medical Center is an internationally recognized interdisciplinary academic health center that has consistently provided high-quality medical care in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area since 1824. The Medical Center comprises the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the 11th oldest medical school in the country; the School of Public Health and Health Services, the only such school in the nation's capital; GW School of Nursing; GW Hospital, and The GW Medical Faculty Associates. For more information on GWUMC, visit [www.gwumc.edu](http://www.gwumc.edu).