

Good morning Chair Peters and members of the committee,

My name is Steven Messinger, the policy director for the Nevada Primary Care Association. We are the state membership association for Community Health Centers, also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers, or FQHCs. We have been grateful to be the recipient of nearly 1.2 million state-administered grant dollars used to boost capacity to treat substance use disorder in our member clinics located across the state. Our FQHCs are a critical tool for bringing these services to underserved populations and rural communities, and this grant has allowed us to expand their ability to deliver these crucial services. However, there are steps the Legislature could take to make this effort much more effective. This legislative body could request a bill approving an expansion of available behavioral health provider types to practice in FQHCs and be reimbursed by Medicaid. This list includes Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Certified Professional Counselors. As this committee turns its attention to the efforts to mitigate the Opioid Crisis, and, Substance Use Disorders broadly, we urge you to consider expanding the types of addiction specialists and other behavioral health provider types to provide sustainable services to our most underserved populations. Thank you for your time.