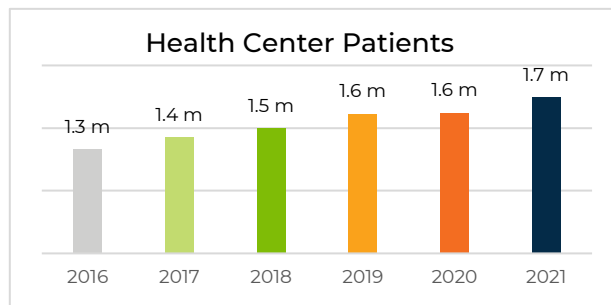


# Fund the FQHC Incubator Program to Expand Primary Care Access



Federally Qualified Health Centers are non-profit, community-driven health care providers serving low income and medically underserved communities. Health centers provide comprehensive primary and preventive care, including medical, pharmacy, dental, mental health, and social support services.

Health centers have experienced a growing demand for services, especially medical and behavioral health. Federal grants to provide care to uninsured patients make up 20% of health center revenue, yet almost 40% of health center patients are uninsured. Historically, no state general revenue dollars are appropriated directly for FQHCs except through the Incubator Program. As Texas grows and FQHC patient case loads grow, additional investments are needed to keep up with growing demand.



## The FQHC Incubator Program Increases Primary Care Access

In 2003, the Texas legislature passed S.B. 610 by Senator Nelson to establish the FQHC Incubator Program. This program provided funding to enhance staffing, expand services, support capital projects, and provide technical assistance for new and existing FQHCs. The program was funded from 2004-2011 until funding was cut due to budget reductions.

During the Third Special Session in the fall 2021, legislators restarted the program by allocating \$20 million in one-time funds from the American Rescue Plan Act for the FQHC Incubator Program. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) opened the Incubator application in July 2022 and awarded 35 projects across the state, expending all the funds by September 2022. The awards supported a broad range of community-driven projects to expand access to cost-saving primary care services, including the examples below.

- Capital project for new clinic
- Clinic renovation and new pharmacy
- New clinic for women's health and pediatric services
- Expansion of school-based health centers
- New mobile mammography unit to screen women
- New clinic to provide integrated medical and behavioral health services
- Hire additional medical providers

While these projects will be impactful for the communities they serve, a great need exists for additional infrastructure dollars so health centers can meet the increasing demand for services across the state.



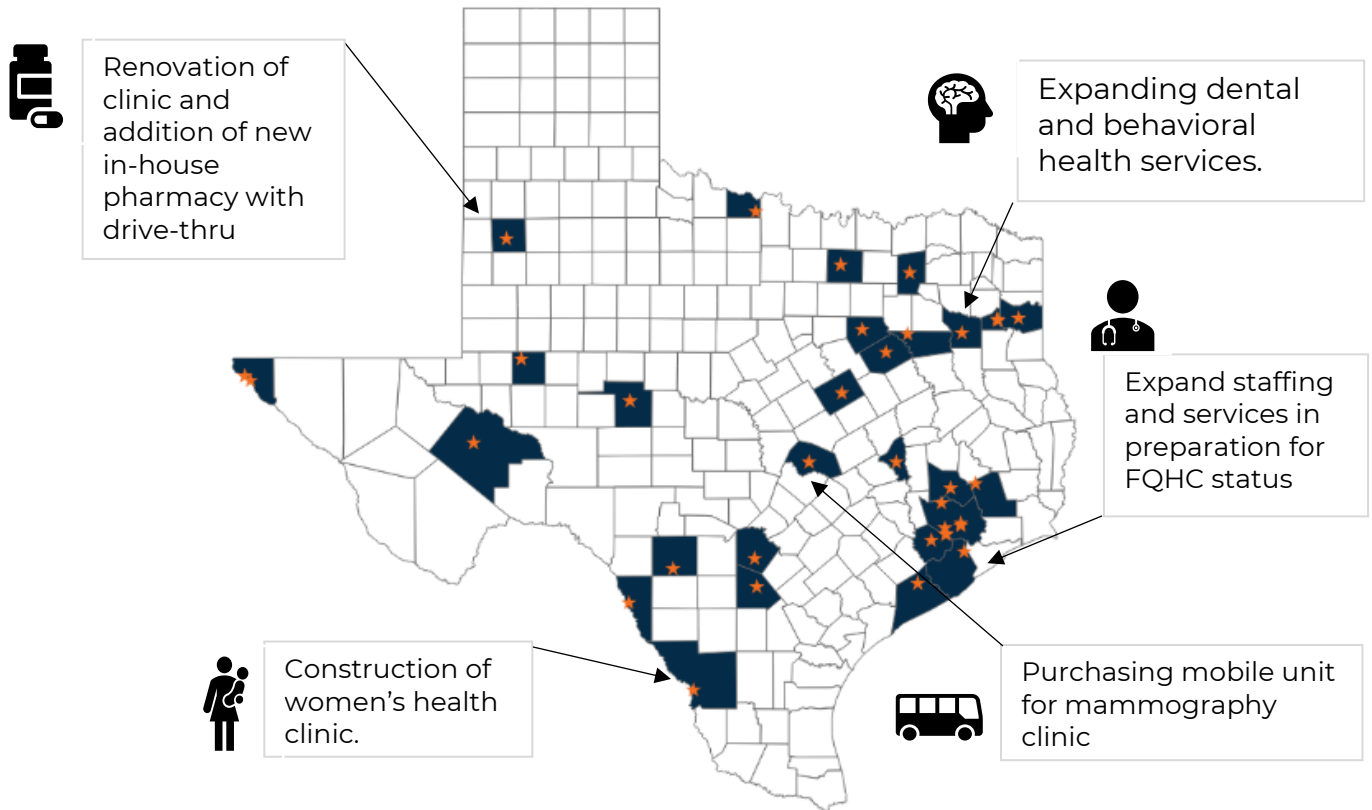
**The legislature should build on recent investments and continue funding the FQHC Incubator Program in the 88<sup>th</sup> legislative session.**

# Fund the FQHC Incubator Program to Expand Primary Care Access



## 2022 FQHC Incubator Program Awards

The following map highlights the counties where the 35 entities received FQHC Incubator Program funding, as well sample projects.



## Support Continued Funding for the FQHC Incubator Program

While the above projects will expand access to care in their communities, many shovel-ready projects were not funded in 2022 because of limited dollars in the program. Continued funding for the FQHC Incubator Program would support the examples below and many others across the state:



Purchase building and equipment for new clinic site.



Increase patient navigators to assist patients in rural communities.



Hire front desk and nursing staff to support clinicians.



Establish a school-based health clinic offering medical and mental health services.



Renovate existing space to add dental health operatories.



Fund additional operational hours to add evening and after-hours care.