



**American Hospital
Association**

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July 20, 2005

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Snowe:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association's (AHA) members - 4,800 hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and 33,000 individuals - I am writing to express our support for your bill, the Medicaid Emergency Psychiatric Care Act of 2005.

As you know, the Emergency Medical and Labor Treatment Act (EMTALA) require all hospitals, including psychiatric hospitals, to stabilize patients who come in with an emergency medical condition. But Medicaid's Institution for Mental Diseases (IMD) exclusion does not allow Medicaid reimbursement to non-public psychiatric hospitals for stabilizing care delivered to Medicaid patients between the ages of 21-64. This exclusion burdens these facilities with an unfunded mandate in fulfilling their EMTALA obligations for this patient population.

Your legislation would eliminate the IMD exclusion and allow non-public psychiatric hospitals to receive appropriate reimbursement for care provided under EMTALA to Medicaid beneficiaries between the ages of 21-64. This will relieve overcrowding in emergency departments and provide the appropriate care these patients deserve in a more timely manner.

Thank you for addressing this important issue. We support the Medicaid Emergency Psychiatric Care Act of 2005 and look forward to working with you and your colleagues to ensure swift passage of this legislation. If you have further questions, please contact the AHA's Curtis Rooney at (202) 626-2678, or crooney@aha.org.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

