March 5, 2008

The Honorable John M. Spratt  
Chairman  
Committee on the Budget  
201 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Budget  
B-71 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt and Ranking Member Ryan:

We are writing to urge the Committee to demonstrate its commitment to Medicare and Medicaid, and the seniors, disabled and children who rely on these programs for their care, by opposing proposed cuts to hospital services in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Budget Resolution. The nation's full-service community hospitals are the health care safety net for millions of vulnerable people, but face many challenges in providing this care: soaring demand, rising numbers of uninsured, new and costly pharmaceuticals and technologies, labor shortages, staying ready to respond to community-threatening events, whether natural or man-made ... to name just a few.

Despite these challenges, the administration on February 4th released a budget for Fiscal Years 2009 - 2013 that proposes unprecedented cuts: $182 billion over the next five years to Medicare, and $17 billion to Medicaid ... a total of nearly $200 billion in cuts to services that patients and communities rely on. Under Medicare, hospital cuts alone would total a staggering $135 billion.

Among the many cuts included in the proposal: hospitals' Medicare inpatient and outpatient inflation updates would be eliminated for the next three years, with updates lagging inflation every year thereafter; teaching hospitals would see their Indirect Medical Education (IME) adjustment cut from 5.5 percent to 2.2 percent over three years, a reduction of 60 percent; programs supporting hospitals that serve a disproportionate share of the poor and elderly would be slashed by 30 percent; and programs that are critical to America's rural hospitals would be seriously eroded.

We hope you will reject these proposed cuts in Medicare and Medicaid spending for hospital services. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress

Phil English  
Member of Congress
Todd Russell Platts
Member of Congress
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress
Betty Sutton
Member of Congress
Mazie K. Hirono
Member of Congress
Leonard Boswell
Member of Congress
Michael McNulty
Member of Congress
Alan Mollohan
Member of Congress
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress
Jim Saxton
Member of Congress
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress
William D. Delahunt
Member of Congress
Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress
Rick Boucher
Member of Congress
Sam Graves
Member of Congress
Bob Filner
Member of Congress
Mike Ross
Member of Congress
John Hall
Member of Congress
Vic Snyder
Member of Congress
Ben Chandler
Member of Congress
Baron Hill  
Member of Congress

William Jefferson  
Member of Congress

Bart Stupak  
Member of Congress

Chris Murphy  
Member of Congress

John Larson  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

Michael Arcuri  
Member of Congress

James Moran  
Member of Congress

Tim Murphy  
Member of Congress

James Walsh  
Member of Congress

C.W. Bill Young  
Member of Congress

Paul Kanjorski  
Member of Congress

Edward J. Markey  
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

Donald Manzullo  
Member of Congress

Michael Capuano  
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress

Wm. Lacy Clay  
Member of Congress

Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress
Charlie Melancon
Member of Congress

Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress

Jim Matheson
Member of Congress

Anna Eshoo
Member of Congress

Bruce L. Braley
Member of Congress

Charlie Wilson
Member of Congress

Joe Sestak
Member of Congress

Ron Lewis
Member of Congress

Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

Frank Lucas
Member of Congress

Darlene Hooley
Member of Congress

John McHugh
Member of Congress

Shelley Moore Capito
Member of Congress

Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

Robert Wexler
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Gary Ackerman
Member of Congress

Mark Udall
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress
Ron Paul
Member of Congress

Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress

Mary Bono Mack
Member of Congress

Melissa Bean
Member of Congress

Stephanie Herseth Sandlin
Member of Congress

Christopher Shays
Member of Congress

Patrick Kennedy
Member of Congress

Jerry Weller
Member of Congress

Howard Berman
Member of Congress

Allison Schwartz
Member of Congress

Rodney Alexander
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

Heath Shuler
Member of Congress

Jerry Costello
Member of Congress

Jim Langevin
Member of Congress

Nita Lowey
Member of Congress

Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress

John Murtha
Member of Congress

Christopher Carney
Member of Congress
Patrick Murphy
Member of Congress

Rob Bishop
Member of Congress

Phil Hare
Member of Congress

Mark Kirk
Member of Congress

Bart Gordon
Member of Congress

Deborah Pryce
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

John Boozman
Member of Congress

Steve Pearce
Member of Congress

Don Young
Member of Congress

Candice S. Miller
Member of Congress

Solomon Ortiz
Member of Congress

David Scott
Member of Congress

Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress

Jesse Jackson Jr.
Member of Congress

Sander Levin
Member of Congress

Tom Reynolds
Member of Congress

Dan Lipinski
Member of Congress

Michael Castle
Member of Congress
Howard Coble
Member of Congress

George Miller
Member of Congress

Laura Richardson
Member of Congress