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March 11, 2008

The Honorable John M. Spratt
Chairman, House Budget Committee
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association (AHA), I want to commend the House Budget Committee for rejecting the Administration's proposed Medicare and Medicaid cuts to hospitals in its fiscal year (FY) 2009 budget resolution. The AHA represents nearly 5,000 hospitals and health care systems, and 37,000 individual members.

By rejecting proposed Medicare and Medicaid cuts for hospitals, the House Budget Committee resolution recognizes the serious challenges hospitals face. At a time when the number of uninsured individuals is rising, Medicare and Medicaid currently reimburse hospitals for less than the cost of providing health care services. At the same time, hospitals need to make significant investments to continue their mission, including improving information technology systems to address patient safety and quality of care, and preparing to respond to emergencies ranging from natural disasters to pandemic diseases or to the threat of terrorism.

We appreciate your efforts to resist proposals to reduce payments for hospital services provided to Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

