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October 28, 2009

The Honorable Earl Pomeroy
U. S. House of Representatives
1501 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Pomeroy:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association (AHA)'s more than 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our 40,000 individual members, I am writing in support of your legislation to provide pension funding relief for hospitals and other employers.

As the largest private sector source of jobs—5 million nationwide—hospitals are a critical part of our nation's economy. Every dollar spent by a hospital supports more than \$2 of additional business activity in a community. The economic crisis that began in 2008 continues to harm hospitals financially. The costs of borrowing needed funds remain at high levels, making it more difficult for hospitals to find the money to meet their employees' pension obligations, as well as to make needed facility and technology improvements. Hospitals fully support requirements that ensure fully funded pension plans for their dedicated workforce, but under the current economic conditions, it is imperative that some temporary relief from these requirements be granted if they are to be met in the long-term.

The *Preserve Benefits and Jobs Act* you propose would be of enormous help to hospitals that have suffered investment losses in addition to operating losses due to the economic downturn. With your legislation, hospitals would be aided in meeting their goal to establish, over time, financially sound defined benefit plans for their employees.

We look forward to working with you on this important and necessary legislation.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

