



**American Hospital  
Association**

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June 22, 2011

The Honorable Diane DeGette  
US House of Representatives  
2335 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative DeGette:

On behalf of our more than 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our 42,000 individual members, the American Hospital Association (AHA) wishes to express our support for the “Preserving Access to Life-Saving Medications Act of 2011.”

This bill would help address the issues leading to shortages of life-saving medications and provide the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with additional authority and information that will assist in preventing further shortages in the future. This legislation is a critical first step in addressing a serious public health problem, and we appreciate your leadership in advancing solutions.

The growing number of drug shortages present serious challenges to hospitals. The number of drugs in critically short supply is increasing at an alarming rate and threatens quality of care in hospitals nationwide. Many of these drugs play a critical role in life-saving treatments, including cancer therapies, widely used anesthetics, antimicrobials and pain medications. In many cases, therapeutic alternatives are not available or carry increased risk of severe side effects and drug-to-drug interactions. The potential harm to patient safety is of paramount concern.

Your proposed legislation would provide the FDA with tools to better manage – and hopefully prevent – shortages of life-saving medications. The bill enables the FDA to work more effectively with supply chain entities to ensure drug availability, and enhances the agency’s ability to monitor drugs that are vulnerable to shortages in the future. The bill also enables FDA to work with drug manufacturers to establish contingency plans for manufacturing interruptions such as raw material shortages, adjustments to production capabilities and discontinuations.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We look forward to working with your office and other stakeholders toward passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack  
Executive Vice President

