



**American Hospital
Association**

Liberty Place, Suite 700
325 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004-2802
(202) 638-1100 Phone
www.aha.org

November 29, 2011

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
219 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Baucus:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association's (AHA) more than 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our 42,000 individual members, I urge you to support legislation to extend several expiring health programs and provisions important to hospitals and the patients they serve. These provisions need to be extended this year.

Hospitals strive to provide their communities with quality care every day. However, it is often difficult to plan for community and patient needs when there is uncertainty over whether a program will continue. We ask that you address these concerns and extend the critical programs listed below:

- Payments for the technical component of certain physician pathology services.
- Ambulance add-on services.
- The outpatient hold-harmless provision for rural hospitals and Sole Community Hospitals.
- Medicare cost payments for clinical diagnostic laboratory tests furnished in certain rural areas.
- Section 508 hospital wage index reclassifications.
- The sunset for Critical Access Hospitals under the HUD 242 hospital mortgage insurance program.

In addition, several critical programs, such as the Medicare-dependent hospital program and the enhanced low-volume adjustment for prospective payment system hospitals, are scheduled to expire next calendar year.

Your support for extending these programs and provisions is vital. The AHA looks forward to working with you to help protect the patients and communities our hospitals serve.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

