



**American Hospital
Association**

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

February 5, 2013

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

On behalf of our more than 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our nearly 42,000 individual members, the American Hospital Association (AHA) is pleased to support your resolution on *The Importance of Rural Health Access for American Communities*.

Approximately 72 million Americans live in rural areas and depend on the hospital serving their community as an important, and often only, source of care. These hospitals face a unique set of challenges because of their remote geographic location, small size, scarce workforce, physician shortages and constrained financial resources with limited access to capital. Congress has previously recognized these vulnerabilities by establishing programs and policies to ensure and protect stable access to health care services for the elderly and others living in rural America. Specifically, it created critical access hospital (CAH), sole community hospital (SCH) and Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) and Rural Referral Centers (RRC) designations to sustain these unique types of rural or small hospitals.

Your resolution recognizes the important role rural hospitals play in their communities. It is important that Congress recognize the value of these organizations. Because of their small size, modest assets and financial reserves, and higher percentages of Medicare patients, rural hospitals disproportionately rely on government payments and unfortunately, Medicare payment systems often fail to recognize the unique circumstances of small, rural hospitals. AHA has and will continue to advocate for appropriate payment on behalf of small and rural hospitals and CAHs.

Again, we are pleased to support this resolution and applaud your commitment to America's rural health hospitals and care providers.

Sincerely,

/s/

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President



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February 5, 2013

The Honorable Jerry Moran
United States Senate
354 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Moran:

On behalf of our more than 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our nearly 42,000 individual members, the American Hospital Association (AHA) is pleased to support your resolution on *The Importance of Rural Health Access for American Communities*.

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