



800 10th Street, NW
Two CityCenter, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20001-4956
(202) 638-1100 Phone
www.aha.org

November 3, 2015

The Honorable Joe Pitts
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gene Green
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 2878

Dear Chairman Pitts, Ranking Member Green, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of our nearly 2,000 small and rural hospital members, the American Hospital Association (AHA), I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 2878, which would extend through calendar year (CY) 2015 the enforcement delay on direct supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services provided in critical access hospitals (CAHs) and rural prospective payment system (PPS) hospitals with 100 or fewer beds.

H.R. 2878 provides immediate and critical relief to small, rural hospitals and ensures patients in these communities will continue to have access to outpatient therapeutic services. As you know, these services have always been provided by licensed, skilled professionals under the overall direction of a physician and with the assurance of rapid assistance from a team of caregivers, including a physician. While hospitals recognize the need for direct supervision for certain outpatient services that pose a high risk or are very complex, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) policy generally applies to even the lowest risk services.

However, because H.R. 2878 applies only to CY 2015, the AHA continues to work toward passage of the Protecting Access to Rural Therapy Services (PARTS) Act (S. 257/H.R. 1611), which would adopt a default standard of “general supervision” for outpatient therapeutic services, among other provisions.



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Again, we are pleased to support H.R. 2878 and appreciate your consideration of this important legislation. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to achieve its passage.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Nickels
Executive Vice President