



Legislative Action Alert

December 6, 2012

SENATORS SUPPORT PROVISIONS OF THE RURAL HOSPITAL ACCESS ACT (S. 2620) IN UPCOMING PHYSICIAN PAYMENT LEGISLATION

Provisions would reauthorize expired programs for MDHs and low-volume hospitals

As part of the AHA Advocacy Alliance for Rural Hospitals, we wanted to make sure you knew Sens. Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Charles Grassley (R-IA), along with 29 other Senators recently urged the Senate Finance Committee in [a letter](#) to include in upcoming Medicare physician payment legislation an AHA-supported measure (S. 2620) that would extend by one year the Medicare dependent hospital (MDH) and low-volume hospital programs for rural hospitals.

“Rural hospitals deliver health care to more than 60 million Americans and are the health and economic backbone for communities across our nation,” the senators said in a letter to Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) and Ranking Member Orrin Hatch (R-UT). “These small, hardworking hospitals are often the sole source of comprehensive health care in their area, and are typically the largest employer, and economic engine, in the communities they serve. Yet, rural hospitals face a wide array of financial difficulties and operational challenges under the current Medicare Prospective Payment System. S. 2620 will ensure another year of support for these critical providers.”

The MDH program and the low-volume adjustment are critical programs for small, rural hospitals, and the AHA continues to advocate for reauthorization of these two programs. We appreciate hospitals’ participation in AHA Advocacy Days and contacting their lawmakers following our Rural Advocacy Alerts.