



**American Hospital  
Association®**

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**AHA STATEMENT ON H.R. 4188**  
*Establishing Beneficiary Equity in the Hospital  
Readmission Program Act*

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The bill introduced today would provide welcome relief to hospitals that are unfairly penalized by readmission penalties because they care for large numbers of poor patients, often with very complicated and multiple medical problems. It helps ensure that hospital performance improvement efforts are focused on readmissions that are preventable.

Many poorer communities have large gaps in crucial community services to support patients when they are released from the hospital, such as the availability of fresh foods with high nutritional value, public transportation for necessary medical check-ups and assistance in getting other types of much needed and proper follow-up care. And many patients simply don't have the resources for medicines and other supplies necessary to ensure recovery from illness and injury. As a result, hospitals serving these neighborhoods often have higher numbers of readmitted patients and are penalized for factors beyond their control.

America's hospitals are strongly committed to reducing unnecessary readmissions for patients. They are working to better communicate with patients and their families and provide the knowledge and skills they need to continue the patient's care at home. They are also working with primary care providers, nursing homes, home health care, pharmacies and others in the community to keep patients from unnecessarily returning to the hospital.

This bill greatly improves the fairness of readmissions penalties by requiring that CMS takes into account the number of a hospital's patients who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. This well-established measure of lower socioeconomic status will help ensure that hospital performance is compared fairly while maintaining an incentive for all hospitals to reduce unnecessary readmissions.

We applaud the leadership of Representative Renacci (R-OH) in introducing this important bill. We look forward to working with Congress to make the legislation a reality.

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