



# Action Alert

Monday, July 25, 2016

## **Bill Introduced to Delay Release of CMS Star Ratings for One Year**

*Urge your representative to support the bill*

Reps. Jim Renacci (R-OH) and Kathleen Rice (D-NY) have introduced a bill to delay for at least one year the introduction of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) new hospital star ratings. Please contact your representative and urge him or her to support the bill. CMS could release the ratings as early as this week.

The AHA and many members of Congress have expressed concerns about the methodology underlying the star ratings and have urged CMS to delay their release to ensure the ratings are fair and reliable. Earlier this month, we, along with the Association of American Medical Colleges, America's Essential Hospitals and the Federation of American Hospitals, urged (<http://news.aha.org/article/160707-hospital-groups-urge-cms-to-address-concerns-with-star-ratings-methodology>) CMS to share additional information with hospitals and the public about how accurately the overall hospital quality star ratings portray hospital performance, and work with hospitals to validate the methodology or continue to withhold publication of the ratings. We also shared an analysis (<http://www.aha.org/content/16/16georgetownmeas.pdf>) by an independent expert that gave reason to believe that the assumptions on which the current model is based are flawed. On July 21, the agency released impact data (<http://news.aha.org/article/160721-cms-issues-data-on-national-distribution-of-overall-hospital-star-ratings>) that continues to raise questions and concerns about the methodology and may unfairly penalize teaching hospitals and those serving the poor.

Today's bill, the "Hospital Quality Rating Transparency Act of 2016," would delay the release of the hospital star ratings until no earlier than July 31, 2017 and require CMS to accept comments for 60 days on its methodology and the data used. In addition, it asks that the methodology and data be validated by a third party. The bill also would require the agency to remove the star ratings from the Hospital Compare website if they are posted prior to the bill's enactment.

**Please contact your representative and urge him or her to support the bill. It is critical that the bill garner wide-spread, bipartisan support.**