



**American Hospital  
Association®**

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November 29, 2016

Dear Congressman:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association's (AHA) nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our 43,000 individual members, I am writing to commend the Congress for its work on the revised 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures bill, and express our support for the legislation.

We urge the House to approve this legislation tomorrow, as it helps improve hospitals' ability to treat some of the most vulnerable patients. The bill includes important provisions related to hospital outpatient services, rural health care, a much needed socioeconomic adjustment to the readmissions program, relief for long-term care hospitals (LTCHs), and important provisions related to behavioral health and opioids. Specifically, we are pleased that this bill:

1. Addresses the consequences of the Bipartisan Budget Act on Medicare outpatient payment to hospital-based clinics that were under development at the time of the legislation's passage;
2. Establishes a socioeconomic adjustment in the readmissions program;
3. Extends the Rural Community Hospital Demonstration Program;
4. Addresses "25% Rule" relief for LTCHs;
5. Ensures flexibility in physician supervision for critical access hospitals;
6. Provides significant advances in behavioral health treatment and funding; and
7. Makes a meaningful investment to combat the opioid abuse crisis and help patients in recovery.

We look forward to continuing to work with Congress to address some outstanding issues, including the relocation of hospital outpatient departments so they can continue to provide patient access to care and making needed changes to allow for flexibility in electronic health records.

America's hospitals appreciate the leadership and support many in Congress have shown this year on numerous issues important to patients and the hospitals and health systems that serve them. Please contact me if you have questions or feel free to have a member of your team contact Erik Rasmussen, vice president for legislative affairs, at [erasmussen@aha.org](mailto:erasmussen@aha.org) or (202) 626-2981.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Nickels  
Executive Vice President

