

September 9, 2026

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Thune, Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries,

The undersigned organizations are writing to urge enactment of the *Saving Today's Acute Care Resources (STAR) Act* (H.R. 9468) without delay. Swift enactment of the STAR Act is critical to stabilizing the Long Term Care Hospital (LTCH) industry so that the needs of our sickest and most vulnerable Americans can continue to be met.

Unanimously approved by the Ways and Means Committee on July 15th, the STAR Act represents a critical step toward strengthening Medicare policy for LTCHs and ensuring continued access to specialized hospital-level care for patients recovering from respiratory failure, severe infections, traumatic injuries, organ failure, and other medically complex conditions requiring extended acute care.

The STAR Act would expand standard-rate payment eligibility for high-acuity patients and allow direct admissions to LTCHs from Critical Access Hospitals—two longstanding priorities for the LTCH community that will improve patient access to the specialized care LTCHs provide.

The Committee's unanimous approval reflects the broad and bipartisan recognition of the vital role LTCHs play within the healthcare continuum and the urgent need to modernize Medicare policies to ensure LTCHs can continue to treat critically and chronically ill Americans.

As Congress considers this important legislation, we respectfully urge consideration of two technical refinements that would further strengthen the bill, including restoring the implementation dates and eligibility threshold to the bill as originally introduced. Earlier implementation is particularly important given the continued financial pressures facing LTCHs and the ongoing erosion of access resulting from hospital closures and reduced capacity across the country. Delaying these reforms risks further limiting access to the specialized care that critically ill patients depend upon.

While we believe these targeted adjustments would improve the legislation and accelerate relief for providers and patients, they should not impede prompt congressional action on this broadly supported bipartisan measure.

Since 2016, nearly one-quarter of the nation's long-term acute care hospitals have closed, reducing access for Medicare beneficiaries with the most complex medical needs. Enactment of the STAR Act is urgently needed to help stabilize this essential component of the healthcare system while supporting more appropriate patient placement and improving care coordination across hospitals.

We appreciate your leadership and respectfully request that Congress consider and approve the STAR Act at the earliest opportunity. We stand ready to work with Congress to ensure the legislation provides timely, meaningful relief that preserves access to high-quality long-term acute care for the patients who need it most.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

AMG Specialty Hospitals
American Hospital Association
Coalition of Long-Term Acute-Care Hospitals
Federation of American Hospitals

National Association of Long Term Hospitals
PAM Health
ScionHealth
Select Medical

CC:

The Honorable Mike Crapo
The Honorable Ron Wyden
The Honorable Jason Smith
The Honorable Richard Neal
The Honorable Kevin Hern
The Honorable Carol Miller
The Honorable Lloyd Smucker