



**American Hospital
Association®**

800 10th Street, NW
Two CityCenter, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20001-4956
(202) 638-1100 Phone
www.aha.org

April 28, 2017

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
United States Senate
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stabenow:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our clinician partners – including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers – and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) is pleased to support your legislation, the Medicare Ambulance Access, Fraud Prevention and Reform Act of 2017 (S. 967), which provides for a permanent increase in Medicare payment rates for ground ambulance services.

Your legislation is of particular consequence in rural communities, since Congress has routinely provided for additional payments for ambulance services that require longer travel distances. The current extension of these payments will expire on December 31, 2017 without further action from Congress. In addition to protecting access to ambulance services through adequate payment, your legislation directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to study how the additional payments should be modified (if at all) to account for the costs of providing ambulance services in urban, rural and super-rural areas. This would ensure that federal payments are aligned with appropriate data and utilization patterns.

Again, the AHA supports S. 967 and looks forward to working with you and your colleagues toward final passage.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Nickels
Executive Vice President

