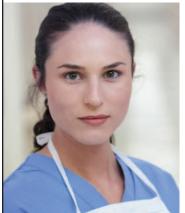
Hospitals Are Hurting











Hospitals have always struggled with some tough economic realities. But America's economic crisis has hit hospitals unusually hard:

- 53% of hospitals are cutting or considering cutting staff.
- 27% are cutting or considering cutting services.
- Uncompensated care is up 8%.
- More than 50% of hospitals are postponing or reconsidering hospital-improvement projects, the acquisition of critical equipment and investments in new information technology.
- The federal government continues to pay less than the cost of providing services to Medicare and Medicaid patients.

These are alarming numbers since community hospitals directly employ more than <u>five million</u> people, and hospitals support one in ten of <u>all</u> American private sector jobs.

Plus, hospitals are the <u>single largest employer</u> in most rural communities, and in 2007 <u>45% of all new private sector jobs</u> were created in the health care sector.

Hospitals need help to ensure they can continue to deliver top-quality care. Here are several steps Congress can take <u>now</u> — through the economic recovery package — to invest in hospitals and the people who rely on them. Because if hospitals suffer, we all suffer.

- Provide health coverage to the unemployed.
- <u>Invest</u> in health information technology to improve patient care.
- Ensure access to hospital capital financing to modernize and upgrade facilities and provide cutting-edge technology.
- Provide financial operating relief for struggling hospitals.
- Overturn regulations that are nothing more than backdoor budget cuts, such as reducing Medicare capital indirect medical education payments, cutting \$1.3 billion to teaching hospitals, and cutting Medicaid payments for outpatient services — potentially denying needed care to America's most vulnerable patients.
- Address the shortage of registered nurses by increasing the domestic supply of nurse faculty, and by establishing nurse retention demonstration grant programs to help create a career ladder path to become an RN.
- Assist states in supporting Medicaid.

House Members:

Please sign the Brady-Wilson letter urging President-elect Obama to maintain the economic health of America's hospitals.



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