

July 15, 2020

The Honorable Mike Thompson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
406 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Thompson:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, 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 the Critical Access Hospital Expansion Act of 2020 (H.R. 6693).

As you know, the Critical Access Hospital (CAH) designation allows small rural hospitals to receive cost-based Medicare reimbursement, which can help sustain services in the community. Hospitals must meet several criteria, including a mileage requirement, in order to be eligible. A hospital can be exempt from the mileage requirement if the state certifies the hospital as a necessary provider; however, the necessary provider designation expired on Jan. 1, 2006. AHA supports your legislation to re-open the necessary provider CAH designation to further support local access to care in rural areas.

Rural hospitals are the cornerstones of their communities. They provide access to care for patients close to home and support the local economy. However, many of these hospitals struggle to address the increasing challenges of providing health care in rural America. Your legislation is an important step in ensuring access to care in rural communities.

Again, we are pleased to support this legislation and look forward to working with you to achieve its passage.

Sincerely,

/s/

Thomas P. Nickels  
Executive Vice President

