

July 19, 2022

## Urge Your Representatives, Senators to Sign 'Dear Colleague' Letters to CMS to Fix Inadequate Hospital Inpatient Payment Proposal

*Widespread bipartisan support is pivotal for this effort*

Bipartisan “Dear Colleague” letters are circulating in the House and Senate that would ask the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to make critical changes to the hospital inpatient prospective payment system proposed rule for fiscal year (FY) 2023 to more accurately reflect the cost of providing hospital care to patients.

Reps. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., and Carol Miller, R-W.Va., are spearheading [the House letter](#) and Sens. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., and Kevin Cramer, R-N.D., are leading [the Senate letter](#).

### TAKE ACTION

**Please contact your representatives and senators today and ask them to sign the bipartisan letters to CMS. It is important that we secure as many signers as possible for both letters to encourage CMS to make these necessary changes in the agency’s final rule. The deadline for signatures on the House letter is July 22. The deadline for the Senate letter is July 21. AHA has developed a [sample message](#) that you can send to your legislators asking them to sign on to the letters.**

### AHA RESOURCES

- [AHA Fact Sheet](#) with more details on the issue that you can use in conversations with your lawmakers.
- [AHA Letter to Congress](#) urging it to weigh in with CMS.
- [AHA Letter to CMS](#) on its Inpatient Payment Proposal.

### KEY MESSAGES

The current inflationary economy combined with the COVID-19 pandemic has put unprecedented pressure on America’s hospitals and health systems. Hospitals are grappling with significant increases in costs for labor, drugs, supplies and equipment, as well as many workforce challenges.

In your conversations with your senators, please continue to:

- **Talk about your organization's increased expenses from supply chain disruptions, workforce shortages, and labor and drug costs.** Even before the pandemic, labor costs — including recruitment, retention, benefits, incentives, and training — accounted for more than 50% of hospitals' total expenses. By the end of 2021, hospital labor expenses per patient were 19.1% higher than pre-pandemic levels.
  - **See the recent [AHA report](#) on the significant cost increases** hospitals have seen and talk with your lawmakers about the challenges they have presented in your ability to care for your communities.
- **Share the negative impact that Medicare payment cuts will have on your organization's ability to provide care.** Talk with your lawmakers about how further cutting Medicare payments to hospitals and health systems will threaten access to care for your patients and communities.

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have further questions, please contact AHA at 800-424-4301.