

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 26, 2018

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow:

We are writing regarding the Supporting and Improving Rural EMS Needs (SIREN) Act (S. 2830), which was included in the Senate-passed version of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. We urge you to include this legislation in the final version of the Farm Bill, with minor modifications to reduce the matching requirement.

Rural emergency medical services (EMS) agencies, including those operated through fire departments, are a critical component of the health care system for rural America. Rural EMS providers are on the front lines of today's opioid crisis, are responsible for meeting the chronic and complex needs of aging populations, and are tasked with responding to natural and manmade disasters and bioterror threats.

The SIREN Act reauthorizes an existing federal grant program within the Health Resources and Services Administration to directly support public and non-profit rural EMS agencies in their efforts to train and recruit staff, provide education to satisfy certification requirements, and address critical equipment needs. Reauthorizing this grant program is important to meet the evolving needs of rural EMS agencies.

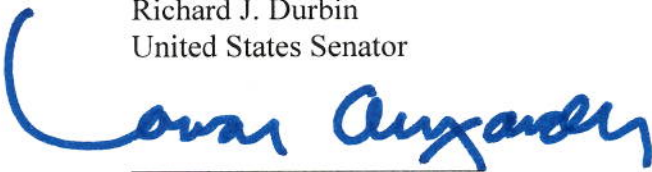
As you begin working with the House of Representatives to reconcile the differences between the two versions of the Farm Bill, we urge you to make sure that the SIREN Act is included in the final version, and that modifications are made to reduce the awardee matching requirement from 25 percent to 10 percent. Changing the matching requirement to 10 percent addresses our concerns that many rural EMS agencies that are eligible for funding under this grant program—who are already facing challenges in affording key supplies or training new staff—would not be able to satisfy a 25 percent matching requirement.

We greatly appreciate your support for the SIREN Act within the final Farm Bill and we urge you to reduce the matching requirement to 10 percent. Thank you again for your consideration of our request.

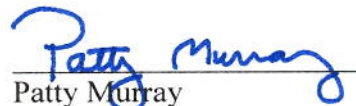
Sincerely,



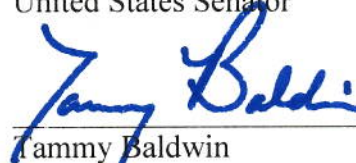
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



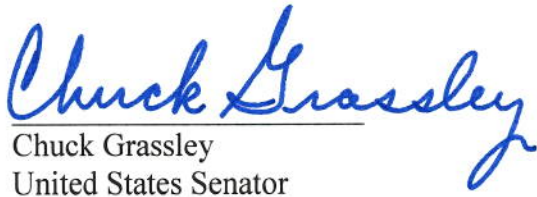
Lamar Alexander
United States Senator



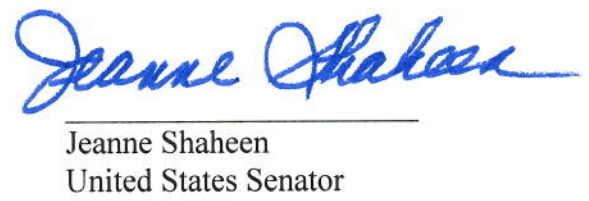
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Chuck Grassley
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator