

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 14, 2017

Thomas E. Price, M.D.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Price,

As senators representing rural states, we look forward to working with you this Congress to ensure access to quality care and to protect the viability of facilities in rural America. Almost ninety percent of our nation is geographically rural, with 20 percent of the population living outside urban areas, often miles away from a health care practitioner.

We appreciate your focus on rural America and look forward to working with you and President Trump to strengthen access to health care services in vulnerable rural communities across the country. Health care is constantly evolving in our country, and rural providers, patients, and facilities need reliable partners at all levels in order to be successful.


Rural hospitals play a critical role in communities across this country. In addition to providing health care services to surrounding communities, hospitals are often one of the main employers. It is critical we work together as Republicans and Democrats to ensure these hospitals are able to continue to provide care.

We recognize that providers need to adapt to changes in the delivery of health care. We are encouraged by innovations we have seen in our states as providers test new care models and technologies like telehealth and remote patient monitoring. We know you will find bipartisan interest in supporting these types of innovations, and we look forward to working with you to improve our health-care system. We recognize the importance of tackling this issue in a fiscally responsible way but believe investments in rural America yield substantial returns on investment.

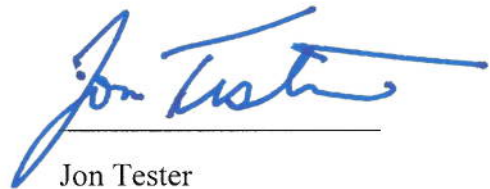
As you take on this new leadership role at HHS, we request that you work with us to ensure that the federal government does not act as an impediment to providing health care in rural communities. Overreaching and onerous regulations from Washington disproportionately harm rural America. We believe that together we can enact and implement effective policies that help providers innovate in care delivery and enable them to make efficient use of available resources.

We hope you remain dedicated to ensuring all Americans—no matter where they live—have access to quality, affordable care. We look forward to continuing to work with you as we move forward to improve health care in rural America.

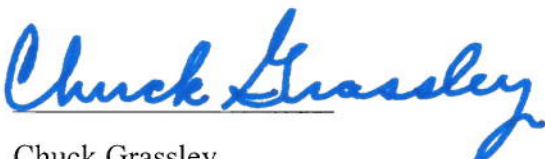
Sincerely,



Roger F. Wicker



Jon Tester



Chuck Grassley



Heidi Heitkamp



Al Franken



John Boozman



Shelley Moore Capito



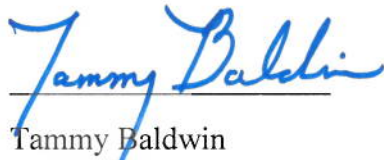
John Thune



Joni K. Ernst



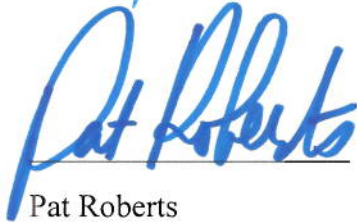
Thad Cochran



Tammy Baldwin




James Lankford



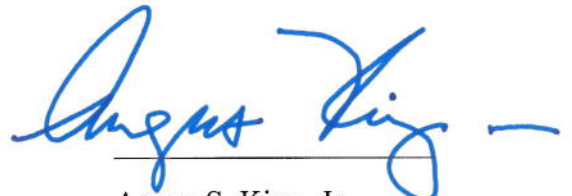
Pat Roberts



James M. Inhofe



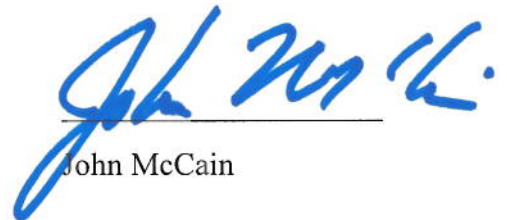
Roy Blunt



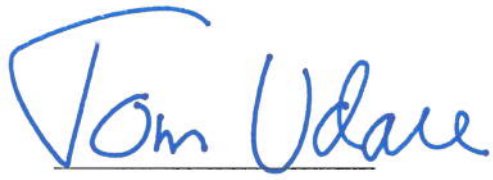
Angus S. King, Jr.



David Perdue



John McCain



Tom Udall



Sherrod Brown



Steve Daines



Joe Manchin III



Jeanne Shaheen



John Barrasso



John Hoeven



Robert P. Casey, Jr.



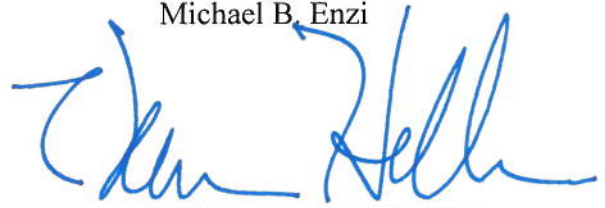
Amy Klobuchar



Michael B. Enzi



Ron Johnson



Dean Heller



Susan M. Collins



Deb Fischer



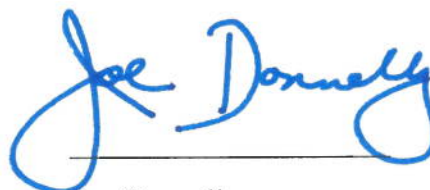
Cory Gardner



Lindsey O. Graham



M. Michael Rounds



Joe Donnelly



James E. Risch



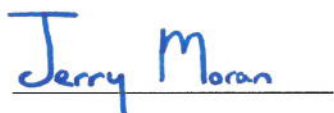
Mike Crapo



Lisa Murkowski



Todd Young



Jerry Moran