**State Offices of Rural Health Talking Points**

* Federally funded since 1991, the SORH Program assists states in strengthening rural health care delivery systems by **maintaining a focal point for rural health** in each state.
  + These cost-effective programs directly improve health care access and outcomes for rural residents.
  + SORHs are trusted partners of rural hospitals and providers across the state – ensuring programs like Flex and SHIP are not just administered but truly impactful. Not only do SORHs administer these programs, they do it well because they of long-term relationships with hospitals and healthcare providers in the state.
* The program provides funding for an institutional framework helps small rural communities **leverage state and federal resources to develop long-term solutions** to rural health programs.
  + Leverage the initial investment to secure additional investments rural health programming (XXX insert info from your state- *example from Michigan shows a 27 fold return on investment from federal funding ($237k to $6.4m))*
  + The SORH program is not just a Federal program. It's a Federal- state partnership with a 3-to-1 match requirement, meaning for every federal dollar invested, states contribute three dollars. This cost-sharing model ensures shared responsibility, maximizes the impact of federal funds, and reflects strong state-level commitment to rural health.
* The SORH program provides foundational funding to support core staffing and operations that enables states expand **workforce development, primary care access, and continuing education statewide**. Example activities investments support include:
  + *Workforce Development*: Educating future and current health professionals about practicing in rural communities. Supporting "grow-your-own" pipeline programs for high-need roles—from lab technicians to advanced clinicians.
  + *Ensuring Primary Care Access:* 
    - Building financial and operational sustainability for certified Rural Health Clinics and other rural providers.
    - Supporting quality improvement efforts that address chronic conditions like kidney and cardiovascular disease
  + *Provider Educatio*n: Offering a trusted, low-cost education model to improve rural care delivery. Delivering continuing education credits annually through Grand Rounds and Project ECHO programs (focusing on infectious disease, One Health, and diabetes)