



September 1, 2022

The Honorable Terri Sewell  
Congresswoman  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Carol Miller  
Congresswoman  
House of Representatives

Dear Representatives Sewell and Miller:

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA), a nonprofit organization of 21,000 members that represents the health interests of rural Americans, applauds your introduction of H.R. 8747, the *Assistance for Rural Community Hospitals (ARCH) Act*. This legislation will help rural hospitals and their patients by extending the Medicare Dependent Hospital (MDH) and Low-Volume Hospital (LVH) programs by five years.

Rural hospitals play a key role in the health infrastructure and economies of their communities. As the rural hospital closure crisis continues to jeopardize access to health services for hundreds of thousands of rural Americans, it is important to extend programs such as these to protect rural health care.

Currently, there are 139 MDHs and 545 LVHs that play an integral part in the rural health safety net. First established by Congress in 1987, hospitals eligible for the MDH program must have 60 percent or more of inpatient days or discharges from Medicare patients. LVHs differ in the sense that eligible hospitals must have less than 3,800 discharges per year and must be located at least 15 miles from another health care site. The continuous financial stability provided by these programs will help preserve the rural health safety net.

The NRHA strongly supports the ARCH Act and commends your efforts to protect rural hospitals amid the ongoing hospital closure crisis. Without this piece of legislation, existing MDH and LVH programs would expire on September 30, 2022. It is important for Congress to act fast and ensure the stability of these hospitals before its deadline.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Kristen Batstone at 202-639-0550 or by email at [kbatstone@ruralhealth.us](mailto:kbatstone@ruralhealth.us). We thank you for sponsoring this important legislation and being stalwart champions for rural America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan Morgan", is written over a light grey circular stamp.

Alan Morgan  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Rural Health Association

**RuralHealthWeb.org**

50 F. St., N.W. Suite 520

Washington, DC 20001 | 202-639-0550