

Monday, Feb. 9th

Pre-Session Day

All times are in EST

11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

NRHA Rural Health Fellows Meeting

Initial training session for the new 2026 Rural Health Fellows. (Limited to incoming cohort only)

12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

State Association Council Meeting

Meeting of the State Association Council. (Limited to current members only)

1:30 – 2:15 p.m.

Government Affairs Committee

Meeting of the NRHA Government Affairs Committee.

2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

NRHA Board of Trustees

*Meeting of the NRHA Board of Trustees.
(Limited to current Board Members only)*

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

NRHA Constituency Group Meetings

Meeting of NRHA Constituency Groups. Open to public.

- *Clinical Constituency Group*
- *Federally Qualified Health Center Constituency Group*
- *Hospital and Health System Constituency Group*
- *Public Health Constituency Group*
- *Research and Education Constituency Group*
- *Rural Health Clinic Constituency Group*
- *Statewide Health Resources Constituency Group*
- *Student Constituency Group*

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

NRHA Rural Health Congress Meeting

Meeting of the NRHA Rural Health Congress. Open to public for observation.

Tuesday, Feb. 10th

Planting Policy: Where Rural Health Takes Root

All times are in EST

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Registration

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:00 – 8:15 a.m.

Your Voice. Louder!

*Hear from NRHA's 2026 President to learn about the association's priorities in the coming year.
Carrie Henning Smith, NRHA President*

8:15 – 8:30 a.m.

Welcome

Kick off the Policy Institute to learn key advocacy messages for rural health.

Carrie Cochran-McClain, NRHA

8:30 – 9:10 a.m.

Congressional Speakers

*Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Representative Jill Tokuda (D-HI)
Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)*

9:10 – 9:30 a.m.

Department of Health and Human Services

Ken Callahan, Chief Policy Advisor

9:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Congressional Speakers

Representative Carol Miller (R-WV)

9:45 – 10:15 a.m.

Aspen Health Strategy Group Report: Future of Rural Health

*Former Governor and HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius
Alan Morgan, CEO, NRHA*

10:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Congressional Speakers

Representative Angie Craig (D-MN)

10:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Veterans Health Administration

Under Secretary for Health Retired Major General John Bartrum

10:45 – 11:15 a.m.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz

11:15 – 11:30 a.m.

Congressional Speakers

Senator Peter Welch (D-VT)

11:30 – 11:50 a.m.

Health Resources and Services Administration

Administrator Tom Engels

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Networking Lunch (*optional*)

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

Associate Administrator Tom Morris

1:30 – 2:15 p.m.

Time is of the Essence: State of the State of Rural Healthcare 2026

Michael Topchik, Chartis Center for Rural Health

2:15 – 2:45 p.m.

Congressional Speakers

Representative Kim Schrier (D-WA)

Representative Buddy Carter (R-GA)

2:45 – 3:15 p.m.

Office of Rural Health Transformation

Director Alina Czekai

3:15 – 3:30 p.m.

NRHA Awards Presentation

3:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Congressional Speakers

Representative Diana Harshbarger (R-TN)

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Break

4:00 – 4:50 p.m.

Breakout sessions

- *Counting the Cost: H.R. 1's Medicaid Cuts and the Rural Health Equation*
- *Shifting Ground: Federal Policy and the Future of the Rural Health Workforce*
- *Building Integrated Networks for Rural Health Resilience*

5:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Advocacy 101

NRHA Government Affairs team

Advocacy 201

NRHA Government Affairs team

5:30 – 6:00 p.m.

State Prep Meetings

Time for conference participants meet by state to prepare for Hill visits.

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

NRHA Rural Health Fellows Graduation and Reception

Graduation ceremony and reception to celebrate the 2025 Rural Health Fellows cohort.



Wednesday, Feb. 11th

***Branching out: Spread our message to
Capitol Hill***

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7:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Registration

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

NRHA Priorities and Advocacy Tools

Welcome to day two as we take our fight to Members of Congress. Learn messages and tools for advocacy.

Carrie Cochran-McClain, NRHA

9:30 – 10:00 a.m.

State and Congressional District Rural Health Profiles

Keith Bubblo, Stroudwater Associates

10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Capitol Hill Advocacy

Opportunities to meet with participants' state delegations on rural health priorities.

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Congressional Reception

U.S. Botanic Garden

Thursday, Feb. 12th

Cultivating Results: Policy into Practice

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7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Special Interest Group Breakfasts

- *Behavioral Health*
- *Indigenous Peoples Health*
- *Veterans Health*
- *Rural Medical Education*

8:30 – 8:40 a.m.

Congressional Speakers

Representative Shomari Figures (D-AL)

8:40 – 9:00 a.m.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Director Diane Hall, Office of Rural Health

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.

Congressional Speakers

Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR)

9:15 – 9:30 a.m.

NRHA Business

9:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Break

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Breakout Sessions

- *Remote Patient Monitoring Solutions to Rural Aging in Place*
- *State Voices, Shared Vision: Rural Health Transformation in Practice*
- *From Evidence to Experience: Understanding Rural Medicare Advantage*

10:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Break

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

- *From Payment to Preservation: The Future of CAHs in Federal Policy*
- *Smiles, Systems, and Sustainability: Rural Oral Health in the Policy Landscape*
- *Rural Realities: Innovative Strategies to Address Opioid Use Disorder*