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NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

May 27, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senate
393 Russel Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable G. K. Butterfield
United States House of Representatives
2080 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David McKinley
United States House of Representatives
2239 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators Grassley and Casey and Representatives Butterfield and McKinley,

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 the *Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act* (H.R. 2759 / S. 1362). This important legislation would ensure that Medicare beneficiaries in rural and medically underserved areas have access to pharmacists' primary care services by allowing payment for those services under Medicare Part B.

Patients in medically underserved and rural communities often do not have local access to care, and this is particularly true in rural communities that have lost their hospital to the rural hospital closure crisis. Your important legislation would enable rural patients to access primary health care services from local pharmacists, allowing Medicare to reimburse pharmacists for those services. This will allow beneficiaries another provider option in underserved and rural communities.

The *Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act* will increase access to care in our most rural communities in a safe way. Pharmacists today graduate with postgraduate degrees that require six years of medical education. This legislation does not increase or change scope of practice. It simply allows pharmacists to provide Medicare Part B services already authorized by their respective state laws, and it allows Medicare beneficiaries to receive the same level of care that pharmacists are licensed to provide to other patients. Nearly 90 percent of the United States population lives within five miles of a pharmacy, making them a locally accessible resource for patients all over the country.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Josh Jorgensen at 202-639-0550 or by email at jjorgensen@nrharural.org. 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 blue circular stamp.

Alan Morgan
Chief Executive Officer