



Action Alert

Monday, August 10, 2015

NEED ACTION FROM..... Hospital leaders

ACTION..... Urge your legislators to support hospitals

WHEN..... Throughout the August recess

HOW..... Meet with your legislators

WHY Critical decisions impacting hospitals will be made this fall when Congress returns

MAKE PLANS NOW TO MEET WITH YOUR FEDERAL LAWMAKERS

Legislators are home for next four weeks

Congress adjourned last Friday for its annual August recess. Seize this chance to schedule meetings with your representative and senators to share the challenges facing your organization – and the field as a whole – and to urge them to support hospitals when Congress returns in September.

Congress is gearing up for yet another budget battle in the fall. And hospitals once again face the threat of significant cuts to critical Medicare and Medicaid funding. That's why we're asking you to meet with your legislators in their district office or, better yet, invite them to tour your organization to see firsthand the good work you do for your community and the ways that further reductions to Medicare and Medicaid payments would affect your ability to provide care to your patients and community. They will be in their states and districts through the first week of September.

In addition, there are several items of importance to hospitals before Congress:

- First, Reps. Pat Tiberi (R-OH) and Richard Neal (D-MA) are asking their House colleagues to join them in sending a [letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services urging the agency to reconsider its proposed negative update for the outpatient prospective payment system in 2016. And to provide better scrutiny of, and transparency around, the projections made by its Office of the

Actuary. It is critical that we secure as many signatures as possible. **Please urge your representative to sign on to the letter by Sept. 18.**

- Second, Congress is considering bills on a range of issues important to hospitals – from making adjustments to the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program, to increasing the number of available physician residency slots at teaching hospitals, to standardizing the process for the review of proposed hospital mergers between the antitrust agencies, and a host of bills making improvements for small, rural hospitals. The August recess provides an excellent opportunity to share with your legislators and their staff how these bills would positively impact your hospital, your patients and your community. **Visit www.aha.org/action for more on each bill. If your lawmakers have not signed on as co-sponsors, please urge them to do so.**
- Finally, when lawmakers return, Congress also could consider legislation that would negatively impact hospitals – and the patients and communities who rely on them – such as legislation weakening restrictions on physician-owned hospitals or changes to the 340B program. We also are concerned about provisions in the House-passed 21st Century Cures Act related to interoperability that would have negative consequences for health care providers. **Please share your concerns with your legislators and how these proposals would negatively impact your community.**

As always, if you have any questions, please contact the AHA at 1-800-424-4301.