

March 3, 2021

## FEDERAL ADVOCACY ALERT

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Contact Sens. Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth to thank them for their support for Illinois hospitals and urge them to include urgent hospital priorities in the next COVID-19 legislation. Contact information for Sen. Dick Durbin's office is [here](#), and Sen. Duckworth's information is [here](#). A template letter/email is available [here](#).

**BACKGROUND:** The US Senate is currently considering a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill, which was passed by the US House on February 27. (An IHA summary is [here](#).) Although the House-passed version has numerous IHA-supported provisions, there is currently no direct financial relief for hospitals included in the package. Please urge Illinois' senators to ensure frontline providers are not left out as we recover from the fall/winter surge, which was more intense, longer lasting and geographically widespread than anticipated. IHA urges the Senate to add the following priorities:

- Additional \$35 billion to the Provider Relief Fund;
- Extension of the moratorium on Medicare sequester cuts through the duration of the public health emergency designation (current expiration date is March 31); and
- Delay of Medicare Accelerated and Advance Payment program loan repayment and consideration of loan forgiveness.

A complete list of IHA's COVID-19 legislative priorities is available [here](#). A recent letter from IHA President & CEO A.J. Wilhelmi to the Congressional delegation is [here](#). Please [contact IHA](#) with questions.

## TALKING POINTS:

- Hospitals are grateful for the resources and flexibilities Congress and the federal government have provided to date, however, additional federal support is urgently needed.
  - In Illinois, recent surges have been more intense, geographically widespread and longer lasting than anticipated, drastically depleting hospital resources.
  - At the same time, hospitals continue to incur extraordinary expenses to provide care, support the healthcare workforce and purchase needed supplies and equipment.
  - For many Illinois hospitals, longer inpatient and intensive care unit (ICU) stays are utilizing significantly more resources. Yet, in the case of public payers, these longer inpatient stays rarely result in higher reimbursement amounts.
  - As Congress considers the next COVID-19 package, [Hospital Name] respectfully requests your support for additional relief for hospitals, including:
    - Additional \$35 billion for the Provider Relief Fund;
    - Extension of the moratorium on Medicare sequester cuts through the duration of the public health emergency designation; and
    - Delay of Medicare Accelerated and Advance Payment program loan repayment and consideration of loan forgiveness.
  - As our state labors to recover from dire economic and societal devastation brought about by COVID-19, it is vital that our hospitals—and the critical community care they deliver—are secure. We cannot restore our state's economy without the healthcare safety net that hospitals provide, and accordingly, we urge Congress to pass additional COVID-19 relief.
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