

February 2020

*Inside address [see below]*

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*staff member name:*

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and other delegates from the New York State Association for Rural Health (NYSARH) *on behalf of* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_during our visit Wednesday February 12th. A photo is attached [include if a photo was taken].

There were a few key points we discussed that I would like to reiterate briefly.

Policy

1. Bolster Rural Primary Care Services

Much of Upstate New York is classified as a Health Professional Shortage Area. Workforce shortages hamper rural communities’ ability to maintain a full range of healthcare options.

* Support Federally Qualified Community Health Centers – in many communities these are the only healthcare providers that serve residents with Medicaid insurance or no insurance
* Support Health Workforce legislation [S289, S3194, S2902 and S2406]

1. Ensure the Viability of Rural Hospitals

* Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
* Enhance workforce supervision flexibility
* Restore Disproportional Share funding cuts
* Support flexibility in the provision of 24-hour care
* Question reference pricing in price transparency models
* Extend supports for Low Volume Hospitals
* Save Rural Maternity Care
* Provide mileage flexibility when designating Critical Care Hospitals
* Support Rural Hospital legislation [S3103/HR5481 and S2373/HR4243]

1. Build capacity to provide more comprehensive, timely, affordable and effective behavioral health care.

* Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
* Support approval of the NYS 1115 Waiver application for DSRIP 2.0
* Support the CONNECT Act [S2741/HR4932]
* Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
* Support the Seeding Rural Resistance Actto address the crisis of rural suicide [S2599]
  + Continue Rural Communities Opioid Response

1. Support Rural Emergency Services

* Homeland Security
  + Thank you for passing the SIREN Act
  + Modernize FEMA Emergency Responder grant programs to include EMS agencies
* Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
  + Support Medicare Ambulance Access [HR4938]

1. Support Telehealth Solutions

* Department of Agriculture
  + Expand access to telehealth services [S2408 and S1618]

Budget

The President’s proposed 2021 budget eliminates the State Offices of Rural Health and associated programs [e.g. Rural Health Network Development] and the Area Health Education Centers. It also includes reductions to Medicare and Medicaid. We encourage Congress to take a longer view on the value of investment in Rural Health programs and the funding streams that support the economic survival of rural communities.

NYSARH is a not-for-profit, non-partisan, grassroots organization working to preserve and improve the health of the residents of rural New York State. The mission of NYSARH is to improve the health and well-being of rural New Yorkers and their communities.

Thank you for your continued support of Rural Health Issues. Please feel free to contact me if we can provide any further detail regarding the NYSARH policy priorities.

Your name, contact info & signature

NYSARH Volunteer

The Honorable Charles Schumer

U.S. SENATE

Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand

U.S. SENATE

Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Antonio Delgado

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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The Honorable Sean Maloney

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The Honorable Paul Tonko

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The Honorable Elise Stefanik

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The Honorable Anthony Brindisi

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The Honorable John Katko

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Honorable Joseph Morelle

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The Honorable Tom Reed

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The Honorable Brian Higgins

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