**NYSARH Advocacy Update** March 12, 2021

All materials are on the NYSARH Policy Page: <https://nysarh.org/policy/>

State Advocacy

*Briefing*

A briefing was held January 26th . A recordingis available at <https://nysarh.org/policy/advocacy-toolkit-2021/>

*Visits*

NYSARH members have reported to NYSARH meetings with staff of 16 Assembly Members and 13 Senators. If you have met with your legislator and have not told us, please email Sara at sara@nysarh.org or fill in your visit on the NYSARH shared document: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19ik5Op4TBfexL7zYgivJ0-Y2JWysCldnCjfB-MOyFFI/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19ik5Op4TBfexL7zYgivJ0-Y2JWysCldnCjfB-MOyFFI/edit%23gid%3D0)

*Progress*

We have secured sign-on and individual letters from members to the leadership in both the Assembly and Senate in support of RHN/RAH and in the Senate for AHECs.

NYSARH engaged with our EMS partners to substantively improve legislation introduced by Assemblyman Santabarbara and Senator Hinchey A1561B/S3503B: Authorizes the department of health to establish the New York state rural ambulance services task force; requires such task force to conduct a study on the unique challenges faced by New York state ambulance services in rural areas and possible long-term solutions to such challenges.

Everyone we spoke with expressed support for better access to broadband internet and telehealth services.

We continued to advocate for the re-establishment of the Rural Health Council as well as funding for Public Health, Workforce and Prevention Agenda programs.

*Scandal*

NYS Republicans exposed a cover-up of a report of Nursing Home deaths due to COVID. As evidence mounted, Democrats agreed, and the Governor was stripped of some of his emergency powers. More recently, Governor Cuomo has been accused of inappropriate behavior by seven women [as of this writing]. Many state and federal legislators, as well as Mayor DeBlasio, have suggested that he resign. The Assembly has initiated an Impeachment process.

*American Rescue Plan*

NYS is scheduled to receive more than $12 billion and more money is approved for cities, counties, school districts and local governments. This gives the legislature MUCH more freedom to appropriate funds to NYSARH-priority programs.

Federal Advocacy

*Briefing*

NRHA held the virtual Policy Institute February 9th and 10th . <https://www.ruralhealthweb.org/events/event-details?eventId=17>

*Visits*

NYSARH members have reported meetings with staff of eight Representatives and both Senators. If you have met with your legislator and have not told us, please email Sara at sara@nysarh.org.

*Rural Health Clinics*

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, signed by President Trump in December 2020, included some language that disadvantages Rural Heath Clinics generally, and especially RHC opened after 2019. Several NYS rural hospitals recently opened or are in the process of building RHCs. The NRHA is aware of this issue and is advocating for providers. <https://www.ruralhealthweb.org/advocate>

*Progress*

It is too early to assess Federal progress.