



**The Mission of the NYS Association for Rural Health  
is to improve the health and well-being of rural  
New Yorkers and their communities.**

Hon. Kathy Hochul  
Governor  
Executive Chamber  
NYS Capital  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

The New York State Association for Rural Health (NYSARH) is a statewide membership organization with a mission to improve the health and well-being of rural New Yorkers and their communities.

As a group, rural New Yorkers have significant health disparities. These disparities are characterized by indicators such as higher incidence of disease and/or disability, increased mortality rates, lower life expectancies, and higher rates of pain and suffering.

As measures of health status and outcomes demonstrate (see: [NYS County Health Rankings](#)) the health of rural residents is in *decline*.

We recently noted the [NYS Commission for the Future of Health Care](#) does not include a representative focused on Rural Health. While a minority, 20% of New Yorkers live in rural communities and deserve representation on this Commission.

NYSARH continues to follow the development of the new Rural Health Council. We encourage you to provide the resources necessary to ensure that this body can provide effective advice to the State.

In addition, we are writing to you on behalf of the entities who participate in the [Rural Health Network Development Program](#) and the [Rural Health Care Access Development Program](#). Both programs are designed to address the disparities in healthcare access and health outcomes that rural communities experience.

Sincerely,

Mandy Qualls, Chair  
NYSARH Policy Committee