



# AMERICA'S ESSENTIAL HOSPITALS

March 5, 2014

Representative Jim B. Renacci  
United States House of Representatives  
130 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Renacci,

On behalf of America's Essential Hospitals (formerly the National Association of Public Hospitals) representing over 200 hospitals nationwide, I write in support of the *Establishing Beneficiary Equity in the Hospital Readmission Program Act*.

This legislation would guarantee hospitals caring for vulnerable patients are not unfairly penalized by the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program (HRRP). Essential hospitals provide high-quality care to all, disproportionately serving the most vulnerable. Despite our hospitals' success in providing effective care for those in greatest need and improving patient outcomes, there are many socioeconomic factors that impact a patient's health. As a result, some patients are readmitted despite the high quality of care they had received. Your legislation would ensure essential hospitals that provide a high volume of care to individuals dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid are not disproportionately penalized under the HRRP.

America's Essential Hospitals and our members are at the forefront of curbing readmissions and improving patient safety through our work of the Essential Hospitals Engagement Network (EHEN) as part of the federal Partnership for Patients initiative. Key accomplishments of the EHEN include reducing falls with trauma by over 40 percent and a 40 percent reduction in central line-associated bloodstream infections. Of particular interest, hospitals participating in the EHEN saw an average reduction of more than 100 readmissions over the course of a 14 month period, saving payers more than \$17 million in total. Your bill will reduce the negative impact on hospitals serving vulnerable populations while allowing them to continue to make significant improvements and developing best practices for curbing readmissions and enhancing patient safety.

We applaud your commitment to ensuring essential hospitals may continue to provide high quality care to all, including the most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

/s/

Bruce Siegel, MD, MPH  
President and Chief Executive Officer

[essentialhospitals.org](http://essentialhospitals.org)

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