



A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care

September 22, 2016

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,200 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, I am writing to express our support for S. 3129 and its companion bill, HR 5613, which recently was approved by the House of Representatives. This legislation would provide for the extension of the enforcement moratorium on “direct supervision” requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2016.

Catholic health care is committed to its mission of serving everyone, particularly the poor and vulnerable and those who otherwise would not have access to care. Our critical access and rural hospitals play a vital role in that mission, serving populations which otherwise would not have easy access to health care services.

In 2014, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services began enforcing a requirement that physicians must “directly supervise” outpatient therapy in critical access and other small, rural hospitals. That requirement has put a severe strain on hospitals’ ability to maintain these services due to a shortage of health care professionals and the associated costs. The majority of these outpatient therapies are relatively simple and operate appropriately under “general supervision.” In addition, requiring direct physician supervision has not been shown to provide improvement in quality care for patients.

S. 3129 would extend the moratorium on this burdensome requirement through the end of this year. CHA also supports efforts to permanently extend the enforcement moratorium on direct supervision of outpatient therapeutic services for critical access hospitals and rural hospitals with 100 or fewer beds.

We hope you will join us to support S 3129 and urge its passage in the Senate as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Rodgers".

Michael Rodgers
Senior Vice President
Public Policy and Advocacy