

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Carol Miller
U.S. House of Representatives
465 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Terri Sewell
U.S. House of Representatives
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Miller and Sewell,

On behalf of Vizient, Inc., and the health care provider members we serve, I am pleased to again offer our endorsement for the Assistance for Rural Community Hospitals (ARCH) Act (H.R. 6430). Your important, bipartisan legislation would extend Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) and Medicare low-volume hospital payments for five years, offering rural providers the support they need to continue serving their patients.

Vizient is the nation's largest healthcare performance improvement company. Vizient provides solutions and services that improve the delivery of high-value care by aligning cost, quality, and market performance for more than 60% of the nation's acute care providers, which includes 97% of the nation's academic medical centers and more than 25% of ambulatory providers. Vizient provides expertise, analytics, and advisory services, as well as a contract portfolio that represents more than \$130 billion in annual purchasing volume, to improve patient outcomes and lower costs. Headquartered in Irving, Texas, Vizient has offices throughout the United States.

In recent years, hospitals have faced unprecedented clinical and financial disruptions while still providing quality, affordable care. These challenges have had a disproportionate impact on hospitals located in rural areas – specifically those that serve a higher proportion of Medicare patients. The Medicare-dependent Hospital (MDH) program, which is set to expire at the end of the fiscal year, provides vital support to eligible hospitals. Allowing it to expire would be needlessly disruptive and have negative financial impacts on those facilities at a time when they are already facing the impact of historic inflation and unprecedented staffing challenges. Your important bipartisan legislation would support these rural hospitals by extending the MDH program for five additional years through Oct. 1, 2029.

In addition to extending the MDH program, your legislation would also extend the enhanced low-volume Medicare adjustment for an additional five years, through 2029. This critical lifeline provides hospitals who have low patient volumes with an additional reimbursement for each Medicare discharge. Extending this policy will ensure that rural hospitals have the long-term financial stability to provide quality care to the patients they serve.

We appreciate your ongoing leadership in working to support rural providers. Please do not hesitate to contact me at shoshana.krilow@vizientinc.com or 202-354-2607 if you have any questions about Vizient or if there is any way we can be of assistance in advancing your important legislation.

Sincerely,



Shoshana Krilow
Senior Vice President, Public Policy & Government Relations