

Rural Hospitals, Vital to Their Communities, Need Federal Support

Background

- Nearly 2 million people live in California’s rural communities, which provide food, water, power, and recreation to the state, and their access to life-saving hospital care is at risk due to significant underpayment by the Medicare and Medicaid programs.
- Many small and rural hospitals in California are mirroring a troubling national trend — on average, they have seen their operating margin drop by a frightening 8 percentage points from 2019 to 2023. Between January 2013 and February 2020, more than 100 rural hospitals nationwide closed, including two in California — Corcoran District Hospital and Madera Community Hospital.
- When a rural hospital closes, those in poor health, seniors, and people experiencing poverty suffer the most (the national median poverty rate for rural communities with a hospital closure is 13%).

Key Messages (to support critical access hospitals)

- The Preserving Emergency Access in Key Sites (PEAKS) Act, H.R. 7931, would help critical access hospitals maintain access to ambulance services in their communities.
- [NAME of HOSPITAL] maintains our own ambulance service because there are no other providers in our community. [STATISTICS HERE ON TRANSPORTS IN THE PAST YEAR, GROWING DEMAND, ETC.]
- We need the PEAKS Act to enable us to continue this vital service.

Key Messages (to support rural hospitals)

- The Rural Health Care Facilities Revitalization Act, H.R. 5989, would allow Community Facility Loans and loan guarantees under the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be used by rural health facilities, including [NAME OF HOSPITAL].
- This funding is vital to keep rural hospital doors open to serve their communities.
- H.R. 5989 makes minor adjustments to an existing, proven, and cost-effective program that will make a major difference to rural hospitals.

Resources

- [CHA Letter PEAKS Act](#)
- [CHA Letter Rural Revitalization Act](#)
- [Rural Infographic](#)
- To find out whether your representative has supported the PEAKS Act, or the Rural Revitalization Act, check [CHA’s Federal Legislative Tracker](#)

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