[HOSPITAL LETTERHEAD GOES HERE]

July XX, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks

Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee

1021 O St., Suite 8220

Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT:** **SB 1423 (Dahle) — SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

California must do all it can to ensure patients have uninterrupted access to health care in rural, remote communities. Nearly 750,000 of the state’s 2.3 million rural residents live in communities served by California’s critical access hospitals (CAHs) like [NAME OF HOSPITAL]. These are the people all Californians depend on for food, water, power, and the preservation of the state’s natural beauty. Now, the lifesaving and life-changing hospital care they depend on is at risk.

California’s 37 CAHs, serving communities located at least 35 miles from another medical facility, have seen their operating margins drop by a frightening 8 percentage points from 2019 to 2023, and two-thirds lose money every day to deliver care and maintain access to vital services. Here at [NAME OF HOSPITAL], we [DESCRIBE FINANCIAL CHALLENGES AND THEIR IMPACT ON CARE].

**That’s why we support Senate Bill** **(SB) 1423 (Dahle, R-Bieber), which would create a hospital technical advisory group within the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to analyze the ability of CAHs to remain financially viable under existing Medi-Cal payment methodologies.**

Our hospital serves a community of [DESCRIBE POPULATION, DISTANCE FROM NEXT NEAREST HOSPITAL, AND SOME KEY SERVICES THAT YOU PROVIDE]. Without a pathway to financial stability through predictable and adequate reimbursement, access to these vital services is in jeopardy.

A key responsibility of this advisory group would be the inclusion of representatives from CAHs like ours, as well as community-based organizations that represent rural communities. This process would finally give voice to California’s rural and underserved communities to have the conversations necessary to preserve health care delivery in remote parts of the state. DHCS would submit a report to the Legislature with recommendations to improve the financial stability of these vulnerable hospitals.

The state must continue to meet the needs of areas served by CAHs to preserve health care access for all Californians. For these reasons, [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME] respectfully requests your “YES” vote on SB 1423.

Please contact [INSERT NAME AND CONTACT INFO] if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

[Insert CEO name and title]