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Last night, the U.S. Senate passed the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#); the House is scheduled to vote on it tomorrow, March 27. It is the third federal supplemental appropriations and legislative effort to address the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and its economic impact. The President is expected to sign the measure.

In addition to sweeping economic relief, the legislation includes several measures of particular importance to the hospital community. The American Hospital Association has issued a [summary](#) of the major provisions. Of special note are:

- \$100 billion emergency fund for hospitals and other providers
- Elimination of the Medicaid disproportionate share hospital cuts for fiscal year (FY) 2021 and a 50% reduction in the cuts for FY 2022
- Elimination of the Medicare sequester through the end of this calendar year
- Medicare payment add-on of 20% for COVID-19 diagnosis
- Loans and grant funding for emergency preparedness programs
- Increased flexibility for telemedicine
- Flexibility for post-acute care providers
- Suspension of the three-day stay requirement

Of note, the legislation **does not** provide specific information on how hospitals can access the emergency fund. CHA will be working with the relevant agencies to get that information out to hospitals as soon as possible.

CHA and our member hospitals worked closely with California's congressional leaders to help them understand the needs in our state and our front-line caregivers. They understand that this legislation is a critical component of the federal response but that more will be needed as we realize the full scope of the pandemic.