



**CALIFORNIA
HOSPITAL
ASSOCIATION**

*Providing Leadership in
Health Policy and Advocacy*

March 15, 2021

Sent electronically

Dear Members of the California Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the 40 million Californians who rely on our state's hospitals and health systems, thank you for your commitment to supporting our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, caring for our patients, and protecting our health care heroes. We are grateful for the financial and regulatory support provided to date, but much more is urgently needed.

The California Hospital Association supports H.R. 1868, legislation to forestall drastic cuts in Medicare payments to hospitals. Congress has twice delayed the 2% sequester of Medicare payments in previous COVID-19 relief legislation, but the current delay expires on March 31. H.R. 1868 would prevent sequestration through the end of this year, as well as additional cuts next year. This will give hospitals time to plan and ensure they have the critical resources needed to care for their communities as the pandemic continues. The bill would also make technical corrections to support hospital-based rural health clinics.

The pandemic has taken a tremendous toll on California's hospitals, our valued staff, and our communities. The financial burden has been devastating; early and conservative estimates put California hospitals' losses through the end of 2020 at more than \$14 billion ([*The Financial Impact of COVID-19 on California Hospitals*, June 2020](#)). However, our hospitals have received just under \$8.6 billion from the Provider Relief Fund. Additional relief for hospitals is key to ensuring access to care for all Californians.

As our nation labors to climb out from under the health, economic, and societal impact wrought by COVID-19, it is vital that its hospitals — and the critical care they provide for their communities — are secure. We urge your support of H.R. 1868 as an important step toward protecting access to care.

Thank you for your continued support and attention to the needs of California's hospitals and the patients for whom they care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carmela Coyle".

Carmela Coyle
President & CEO