

March 2, 2021

Urge Your Senators to Add Provisions to Support Hospitals and Health Systems in COVID-19 Relief Legislation

Priorities include more funding for Provider Relief Fund; eliminating Medicare sequester cuts; forgiveness for accelerated payments; among other issues

The House of Representatives Feb. 27 approved the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, legislation to provide reconciliation protection for a roughly \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package. The bill has a number of policies important to hospitals and health systems, including expanding subsidies for certain forms of health care coverage and provisions to bolster the nation's COVID-19 health care response with additional resources for vaccines, treatment, personal protective equipment, testing, contact tracing and workforce development. **See our [Special Bulletin](#) for a summary.**

The action now moves to the Senate, which is expected to take up the legislation and amend it with its own COVID-19 reconciliation bill. That process is expected to start this week. The Senate parliamentarian ruled last week that a provision to increase the minimum wage to \$15 could not be included in the package because it violated reconciliation rules, so additional funding could be available to allocate to other issues.

Please contact your senators today and ask them to add these additional provisions to the legislation:

- More funding for the Provider Relief Fund (PRF). Given allocations made to date and COVID-19 relief legislation passed in December directing use of the funds, only \$4.4 billion will be available for disbursement to hospitals and health systems and other health care providers. [See the AHA fact sheet for more details.](#)
- [An extension of the moratorium on the Medicare sequester cuts.](#)
- [Forgiveness for Medicare accelerated payments for hospitals.](#)

We've made it easy for you to send messages – via email, phone and Twitter – to your senators. [Click here](#) to view our sample messages that you can personalize for your lawmakers. In addition, we have developed a [digital advocacy toolkit](#) that you can use and share to help amplify our messages.

In addition to the priorities mentioned above, as part of the legislation, please ask your legislators to: provide more support for state health programs, including Federal Medical

Assistance Percentages (FMAP); include more federal [support for front-line health care workers](#); and reset the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation Act to reflect both new insights from the pandemic and the effect of recent transformative reforms of the existing post-acute care payment systems. **A complete list of all the issues we are advocating for is [available here](#).**

It also is important that Congress **not** include any provisions that would require [new, unrealistic and burdensome Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\) standards](#).

We have developed resources, including fact sheets, on these issues that you can use in conversations with your legislators. Visit our [Action Center webpage](#) to access all of these resources.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have questions, please contact AHA at 800-424-4301.