

July 15, 2021

The Honorable Robin L. Kelly
United States House of Representatives
2416 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Kelly and Bucshon:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, our clinician partners – including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers – and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) writes to express support for H.R. 4387, the Maternal Health Quality Improvement Act.

Maternal health is a top priority for the AHA and our member hospitals and health systems. The causes for the escalating rates of maternal mortality are complex, including a lack of consistent access to comprehensive care and persistent racial disparities in health and health care. Your legislation would help our hospitals and health systems improve maternal health by funding programs that: develop and disseminate best practices to improve maternal outcomes; educate health care professionals serving maternal health patients with respect to perceptions and biases that may impact care for racial and ethnic minority populations; establish and support perinatal quality collaboratives; and establish programs to deliver integrated health care services to pregnant and postpartum women.

In addition, H.R. 4387 also recognizes the need for improvements in health outcomes for women giving birth in rural areas. A May 10 [report](#) released by the Government Accountability Office found that deaths during pregnancy or up to one year postpartum due to pregnancy-related causes are higher in rural areas compared to metropolitan areas and called for additional efforts to assess program data for rural and underserved parts of the country.

Your legislation would help improve maternal health in rural areas by authorizing grants to implement obstetric networks and maternal telehealth programs that will provide support for the entire pregnancy and postpartum period, as well as funds to purchase pregnancy-related technology, such as ultrasound machines. The legislation also would support a maternal care training demonstration for providers in rural settings, as well as



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make improvements to rural obstetric care data collection at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with a focus on coordinating work on maternal mortality and morbidity and reporting on women's health outcomes on the basis of socioeconomic and geographic factors.

As hospitals work to improve health outcomes for women across the continuum of care, we appreciate the continued support from Congress and your commitment to improve maternal health. We stand ready to work with you to advance H.R. 4387.

Sincerely,

/s/

Stacey Hughes
Executive Vice President