



April 8, 2022

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Congress is in recess for two weeks, and IHA urges hospital leaders to meet with their representatives during this time to discuss ongoing financial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including increased workforce costs.

**BACKGROUND:** The pace of legislation in Washington has slowed, and the current environment makes it challenging to advance policies to assist hospitals with the ongoing financial challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is critical that lawmakers hear directly from their local hospitals about the financial challenges you face and the impact they have on your patients and communities. Many lawmakers believe federal financial relief provided to date adequately offsets the financial losses and expenses hospitals experienced.

Please share with lawmakers the recent IHA [letter](#) urging action on critical priorities to ensure hospitals have the tools and resources they need to provide care. Specifically, IHA requests Congress:

#### Pause repayment of Medicare Accelerated and Advance Payments

On the heels of the Omicron surge, and as the pandemic enters its third year and hospitals are incurring historic workforce costs and higher resource expenses, these loans have once again come due. IHA urges Congress to provide a six-month suspension of repayments, followed by a reduced rate of recoupment for 12 months.

#### Extend Medicare sequester relief

IHA appreciates the Medicare sequester relief Congress has provided to date; however, without further action, Illinois hospitals will incur \$118 million in Medicare sequester cuts in 2022. IHA urges Congress to extend the moratorium on Medicare sequester cuts through the end of the Public Health Emergency or December 31, 2022, whichever is later.

#### Provider Relief Fund

IHA urges Congress to add additional money to the Provider Relief Fund to help address the tremendous financial strain caused by the Delta and Omicron variants and to extend the deadline for spending previously distributed funds.

#### Extend the Hospital at Home waiver program

IHA supports the temporary federal waivers allowing hospitals to stand up expanded hospital at home programs, through which qualified patients may receive care in their homes. Several hospitals in Illinois have either established a hospital at home program or are in process of doing so. These programs, which have the potential to improve health outcomes and lower costs, require investment of financial and other resources, making it important Congress extend the program so that data, best practices, and other information is available to inform the development of a longer-term program. IHA supports the Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act (S. 3792/H.R. 7053) to extend this program for two years.

The Senate is in recess until April 25, and the House adjourned until April 26. [Contact us](#) with any questions.



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