



7/30/2020

The Honorable Chairman Grassley
United State Congress
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Grassley:

As Congress deliberates the phase four Coronavirus legislation, we wanted to take a moment to thank you for once again standing up for rural health clinics (RHCs). Under current law, whenever the public health emergency ends, RHCs and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) will lose their ability to provide telehealth services as distant site providers. However, we are grateful to see in the released draft of the HEALS Act, that RHCs and FQHCs would retain their ability to provide distant site telehealth services for five years after the public health emergency.

We know that this provision made it into the HEALS Act draft because of your leadership and we wanted to express our gratitude to you on behalf of the over 4,600 RHCs nationwide. Allowing RHCs and FQHCs to be distant site providers will ensure that safety-net providers can participate in an increasingly digitized world.

As I believe you are aware, we continue to believe that the payment for these telehealth services should be made through the normal RHC and FQHC reimbursement mechanisms and not the special payment rule created by the CARES Act. We look forward to working with you on this telehealth payment issue as well as our broader initiative to modernize the rural health clinic program in the future.

In the legislative chaos created by the COVID-19 pandemic, you did not lose sight of the rural health clinic community, and for that, we are tremendously grateful.

Sincerely,

Bill Finerfrock

Bill Finerfrock
Executive Director
National Association of Rural Health Clinics