

STATE OFFICES of Rural Health



April 29, 2016

Ranking Member Patty Murray
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies
136 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: State Offices of Rural Health Appropriation Request

Dear Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH), the national membership association of the 50 State Offices of Rural Health (SORH), we are writing to thank you for your consideration of the SORH appropriations request in the FY 2017 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill.

NOSORH is seeking an increase of the Health Resources Services Administration line appropriation for the SORH of \$5.5 million. The increase would allow SORH to lead the coordination of efforts in workforce, economic development, and innovation in rural hospitals, emergency services and rural health care delivery systems throughout the nation. SORH collect and disseminate data which informs public policy decisions that impact rural providers. The technical assistance SORH deliver improves health care provider recruitment, builds effective networks and expands health care services for rural Americans.

Over the years, the demands on SORH resources have increased while funding has not. Although SORH technical assistance activities increased by more than 20,000 from 2009 to 2014, SORH have not received an increase in funding for more than six years. An increase of \$5.5 million will provide approximately \$100,000 in additional funding to each SORH. This increase would be used by SORH to grow capacity to support small town hospitals and clinics working to keep rural residents healthy. It would ensure that medical innovation reaches health care facilities in rural America and help meet the increased demands for technical assistance from rural providers.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. NOSORH thanks the committee for its past support and it is our hope the committee provides this modest increase so SORH can further the work they do on behalf of rural health providers and their patients throughout the United States.

Sincerely,

Teryl E. Eisinger, MA
Executive Director
National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health