[Legislator/Office name]

[Legislator/Office address]

March 10, 2021

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We are writing today as concerned constituents regarding changes proposed by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to its [definitions of Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/19/2021-00988/recommendations-from-the-metropolitan-and-micropolitan-statistical-area-standards-review-committee) (MSAs/MiSAs). These changes were published on January 19, 2021 [86 FR 5263]. While we recognize that there is a need for regular review of key definitions, the proposed modifications would be detrimental to our state, and to our nation as a whole.

The proposed changes would cause an estimated 144 MSAs to lose their Metropolitan designation. This reclassification would have an impact on eligibility for federal support. Multiple programs, including the Community Development Block Grant, link eligibility to location within an MSA. Loss of MSA designation would end eligibility for important federal support.

The proposed redefinition would also have an indirect impact on reclassified MSAs. For example, the proposed changes could have negative financial impact on as many as 248 acute care hospitals across the nation. One acute care hospital has estimated it would lose $2 million annually. This loss is attributable to the Medicare Hospital Wage Index, which is calculated differently for hospitals in MSAs. Medicare revenue losses would place these essential health care providers at risk unnecessarily.

[In our state… add anecdote from your state, if you have one]

We respectfully request that your Office examine the proposed OMB changes and consider contacting them with the following recommendations:

1. Maintain the current levels of MSA and MiSA until a more appropriate alternative is identified.
2. Explore other alternatives to proposed changes, including international standards found in the U.N. Statistical Commissions’ [Degree of Urbanization](https://blogs.worldbank.org/sustainablecities/how-do-we-define-cities-towns-and-rural-areas).
3. Improve transparency in the MSA/MiSA standards review committee and provide for greater stakeholder input.

If you would like to discuss this issue further, please contact our office at [insert contact info].

Sincerely,

[insert signature]