



December 18, 2013

The Honorable Jim Gerlach
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gerlach:

On behalf of America's Essential Hospitals (formerly the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems) and our more than 200 member hospitals across the country, I am pleased to support the *Two-Midnight Rule Delay Act of 2013*.

Your legislation would delay enforcement of the Medicare inpatient admission and review criteria, known as the "two-midnight rule," until October 1, 2014. The two-midnight rule creates a presumption that inpatient admissions that last fewer than two-midnights are inappropriate for inpatient reimbursement.

Members of America's Essential Hospitals are vital to their communities, providing primary care, trauma care, and health professionals training. Many member hospitals are also the sole providers of critical specialty services in their communities and disproportionately provide care to patients with multiple social and health care needs.

Because of the complex case mix at members of America's Essential Hospitals, it is important that physicians have the ability to make admission decisions based on a patient's individualized needs, rather than the administratively imposed benchmark established in the two-midnight rule. The two-midnight rule undermines the clinical decision-making of licensed physicians in favor of a rigid time-based presumption. As such, it is necessary to delay the enforcement of the two-midnight rule until October 1, 2014, providing the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services more time to assess the impact of this policy on patients and hospitals.

We appreciate your leadership on this important issue and are happy to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

Bruce Siegel, MD, MPH
President and CEO

essentialhospitals.org

AMERICA'S ESSENTIAL HOSPITALS
1301 Pennsylvania Ave NW Ste 950
Washington DC 20004

t: 202.585.0100
f: 202.585.0101
e: info@essentialhospitals.org