



April 25, 2018

Teaching Hospitals

Broward Health

Jackson Health System

Mount Sinai
Medical Center

Orlando Health

UF Health Shands Hospital

UF Health Jacksonville

Tampa General Hospital

Public Hospitals

Halifax Health

Lee Health

Memorial Healthcare System

Sarasota Memorial
Health Care System

Children's Hospitals

Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Regional Perinatal Intensive
Care Center

Sacred Heart Health System

Anthony Carvalho

President

The Honorable Marco Rubio
United States Senate
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rubio,

I am writing to you in my capacity of incoming President of the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida (aka the Safety Net Alliance). Our members include Florida's largest and most prominent public, teaching, children's and regional perinatal care hospital systems. Despite representing just 10 percent of Florida's hospitals, each year we provide one-fourth of Florida's hospital care to senior citizens who are Medicare beneficiaries equaling over \$4.6 billion net Medicare dollars. Our association would like to offer our enthusiastic support for **S. 2690, Reforming Medicare Appeals Process Burdening Florida's Hospitals**. We believe it will bring much-needed checks and balances to Medicare's Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) finance and accounting administration.

Your good bill makes several important changes to the Medicare statute that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the DSH program. Perhaps most importantly, it removes the current handcuffs on hospitals' right to due process in administrative and legal challenges to Medicare's DSH payment data and decisions. Allowing hospitals to effectively state their case in these proceedings will lead to more bureaucratic errors being identified and corrected. This will in turn bring increased transparency and efficiency to a program that, while essential to the health of our communities, is too often administered in an obscure and capricious manner.

Why do we care? This bill will ensure that we are able to continue to care for Florida's Medicare beneficiaries. If you recall, Tampa General Hospital nearly lost two million dollars in Medicare DSH payments last year after a Medicare claims administrator failed to properly account for uncompensated-care claims data. While, thanks to your assistance, Tampa General was ultimately paid what Medicare owed them under the law, an intelligently run program should have no need for such interventions. We hope that S. 2690 will bring some of that intelligence to Medicare's DSH program.

The Safety Net Alliance is a Florida not-for-profit corporation whose fourteen members include Florida's largest and most prominent public, teaching, children's and regional perinatal care hospital systems. Despite representing just 10 percent of Florida's hospitals, our members collectively manage one-third of all Florida hospital patient days while absorbing 40 percent of the state's hospital charity care costs and 30 percent of all Medicaid days. Our small group of hospitals are recognized for their unique shared mission to train tomorrow's physicians and provide accessible high-quality specialty care to all Floridians, regardless of their ability to pay.

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Senator Rubio

In closing, I would like to extend not only my gratitude to you as a champion for Florida's most vulnerable and the hospitals that serve them, but offer my assistance as well. Please let me know if there is anything the Safety Net Alliance or I can do to support your efforts to shepherd this important bill through the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lindsey Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "L" and "K".

Lindsey Kennedy
Executive Vice President