



## **INSTEAD OF TRUMPCARE: TEN WAYS CONGRESS COULD SUPPORT RURAL AMERICANS**

By cutting funds to Medicaid, TrumpCare threatens rural hospitals, risks damage to rural economies, and endangers the livelihoods of the families that live in these communities.

If Congress wants to get serious on supporting rural America, here are ten ways they can:

### **1. FINANCIALLY SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN RURAL HOSPITALS**

Medicaid expansion has helped many rural hospitals curb uncompensated care costs by providing coverage to an additional 11 million individuals. Medicaid expansion coupled with modernizing federal reimbursement policies could stabilize rural hospitals.

### **2. EXPAND COVERAGE IN RURAL AREAS**

Medicaid plays a critical role in filling rural coverage gaps. Congress must protect Medicaid and improve access to affordable private coverage in rural areas.

### **3. SUPPORT RURAL AMERICANS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS LIKE OLDER AMERICANS AND VETERANS**

Rural areas tend to be older and have a higher percentage of veterans with costly chronic health needs. As rural populations age, there will be increasing pressures on providers and the federal programs that pay the bills.

### **4. IMPROVE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES**

Medicaid and the Essential Health Benefits helped expand coverage. Congress must protect those gains and give states more tools to fight mental illness and addiction.

### **5. INVEST IN A 21ST CENTURY RURAL HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE**

Congress must do more to encourage medical professionals – from primary care to specialists – to train and live in rural areas to meet the health needs on the ground.

### **6. REDUCE HEALTH DISPARITIES IN RURAL AREAS**

Congress should promote policies designed to improve health literacy, connect rural patients to care, and provide much needed social services to improve health outcomes.

### **7. IMPROVE TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE RURAL HEALTH OUTCOMES**

Greater investment in broadband will improve access to telehealth services, an essential component of improving access to quality care for medically underserved rural populations.

### **8. STRENGTHEN RURAL TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Rural patients must travel farther to receive care. Congress should focus on investing in rural infrastructure and adequately funding programs designed to reduce transportation gaps.

### **9. PUT RURAL AT THE CENTER OF FEDERAL POLICYMAKING**

Federal agencies should be required to assess how proposed policies will impact the challenges unique to rural communities.

### **10. ALIGN INTERAGENCY RESOURCES**

Aligning fragmented funding streams through interagency collaboration would greatly improve rural access to existing federal resources.