

September 2, 2025

Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz
U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Oz,

Thank you for your commitment to engaging with Congress and state partners as the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) implements the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) established through H.R. 1. This initiative represents an unprecedented \$50 billion investment by Congress and President Trump aimed at strengthening healthcare services in rural America.

Reliable access to healthcare in rural areas is crucial for the wellbeing and prosperity of communities across the U.S. However, rural hospitals are increasingly facing systematic challenges to their long-term viability—including significant regulatory burdens, outdated technologies, and financial constraints. The RHTP presents an opportunity to reverse these trends and stabilize, modernize, and sustain rural healthcare providers in Idaho and beyond.

For many communities, funding from the RHTP could be a much-needed lifeline. To ensure success, timely and clear guidance from CMS is essential. Early clarity will aid states like Idaho in developing and submitting plans that align with Congress's intent and deliver tangible results for rural communities.

To that end, I encourage CMS to release guidance and application materials as soon as possible, including:

- Clear application timelines and milestones;
- Comprehensive eligibility criteria and definitions;
- Allowable uses of funds and guardrails; and
- Distribution methodology.

Idaho's hospitals need predictability to plan their budgets, workforce, and services. Prompt guidance and support from CMS will ensure rural hospitals and other providers are able to continue offering emergency care, obstetrics, behavioral health, and other vital services within our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your commitment to rural America.

Sincerely,



James E. Risch
United States Senator