

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 5, 2025

Dr. Mehmet Oz
CMS Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Oz,

We are pleased to write in strong support of the State of Illinois' application for the Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program (CMS-RHT-20-001).

As members of Illinois' Congressional Delegation, we have worked towards improving healthcare affordability and accessibility for rural Illinoisans through workforce retention and recruitment efforts, supporting new rural health delivery models, and addressing the financial viability of rural hospitals.

The RHT Program provides a critical opportunity to further Illinois' goal of improving the health of our rural communities. We believe Illinois' application, prepared by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), strongly aligns with the strategic priorities established by CMS.

The Rural Health Transformation Plan presented in this application stands as a testament to Illinois' unwavering dedication to uplifting our rural communities. Guided by the knowledge, advocacy, and expertise of our stakeholder partners and anchored in the most pressing needs of our rural constituents, this initiative seizes an unprecedented opportunity to tackle disparities in care and reimagine the future of healthcare delivery across rural Illinois.

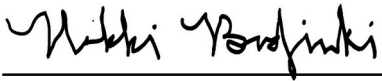
Illinois' RHT Program is designed to deliver critical funding and drive sustainable change in the most underserved rural communities—because every resident deserves access to high-quality care, no matter where they live. Today, nearly 500,000 Medicaid enrollees call our rural areas home, yet the challenges are clear: 60 out of 65 rural counties face primary care shortages, 64 lack adequate mental health services, and 57 experience dental care gaps. Affordability continues to stand as a barrier, and, most heartbreakingly, pregnancy-related mortality rates in rural counties remain unacceptably high.

Working together, we can deliver on the promise to build a healthier, more equitable Illinois—one where every community, no matter its zip code, has the opportunity to thrive.

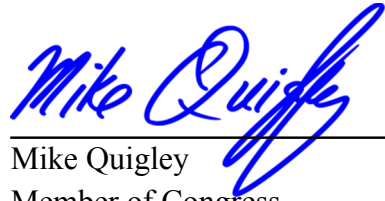
We urge you to give the State of Illinois' application full and fair consideration. Should you have any questions regarding Illinois' application, please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



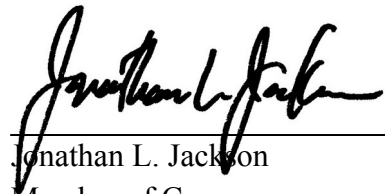
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



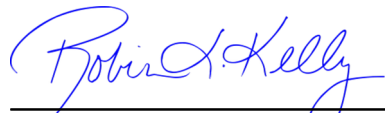
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



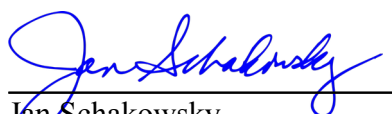
Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



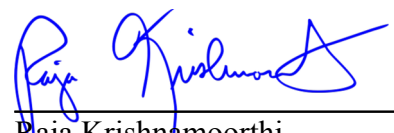
Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress