



AMERICA'S ESSENTIAL HOSPITALS

February 15, 2017

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chair
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hatch and Sen. Wyden:

On behalf of America's Essential Hospitals and its nearly 300 member hospitals across the country, I write to support the appointment of Seema Verma, MPH, as administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

America's Essential Hospitals is the leading association and champion for hospitals and health systems dedicated to high-quality care for all, including the vulnerable. Our members are cornerstones of care in their communities, providing primary care through trauma care, disaster response, health care workforce training, research, public health programs, and other vital services. But they do more than keep people healthy and productive—they bolster the economic health of their communities. Each year, our members generate more than \$165 billion of economic activity for their respective state economies and contribute to more than 1.25 million jobs nationally.

We believe Ms. Verma is well-qualified to lead CMS, given her deep understanding of both health care delivery and policymaking. Through her work at essential hospitals, she has firsthand experience delivering care to low-income and other vulnerable people. She previously served as vice president of planning for the Health & Hospital Corporation of Marion County, an association member in Indiana, and as a director for the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, in Washington, D.C. In 2001, she graduated from America's Essential Hospitals' Fellows Program, which helps rising health care leaders transform the culture of care. Also of note, Ms. Verma served as Indiana's health reform lead, a role in which she oversaw implementation of the state's Medicaid expansion waiver under then-Governor Mike Pence.

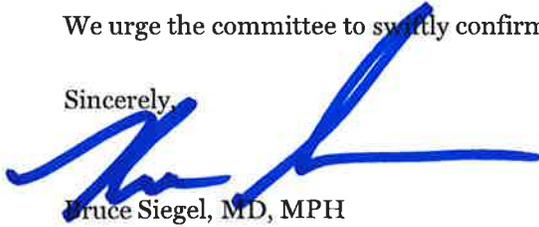
Ms. Verma will contribute an important, state-level perspective on Medicaid, insurance, health care delivery, and public health. As states grapple with options for the future of their Medicaid program, Verma's background in innovative waivers and her proven ability to work effectively with states will engender confidence in the agency's actions.

We stand at a crossroads for health care. As CMS leads the charge for high-quality care at lower costs and with better health outcomes for all people, the agency's role and responsibilities take on heightened importance. At this critical juncture, Ms. Verma would contribute needed and valuable knowledge about Medicaid and Medicare, the complex programs on which our nation's vulnerable people and their hospitals depend.

We look forward to working with Ms. Verma to ensure essential hospitals can sustain their commitment to those in need and to underserved communities, and to continue national efforts to foster innovation and reduce disparities in care.

We urge the committee to swiftly confirm Ms. Verma.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Siegel', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Bruce Siegel, MD, MPH
President and CEO