

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 17, 2019

The Honorable Seema Verma
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Verma,

We write to you in support of an important institution in our state. The Nevada Regional Medical Center (NRMC) located in Nevada, Missouri provides vital services in a rural part our state and has faithfully served the community for 82 years. We request your expeditious, full and fair consideration of their application for the Sole Community Hospital designation.

With the recent closure of Mercy Hospital in nearby Fort Scott, Kansas, NRMC is now the only provider of obstetrical services between Kansas City and Joplin. This closure increases the importance of NRMC as a key link to quality care in a rural area. However, NRMC is facing difficult financial times and is at risk of closure. To prevent closure, they submitted an application in January 2019 for a Sole Community Hospital designation, which would provide them with an \$800,000 annual subsidy.

Congress created the Sole Community Hospital program in 1983 to support small and rural hospitals in underserved areas such as NRMC. This program ensures that Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries in these areas can have access to important health care services that are not otherwise available nearby. The Sole Community Hospital program could serve as a lifeline for NRMC and would ensure that nearby residents continue to have access to care.

However, if NRMC's Sole Community Hospital application is delayed and the hospital closes, there may be irreparable harm done to this region of Missouri. Therefore we urge you to quickly consider NRMC's Sole Community Hospital application and make a determination as quickly as possible. Rural Missouri simply cannot afford to wait.

Sincerely,



Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress



Roy Blunt
United States Senator