

IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

December 10, 2020

The latest about COVID-19 from IHA

U.S. Senate releases third stimulus bill

The third stimulus bill, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, (CARES/S. 3548), was introduced Sunday by U.S. Senate leaders and includes several provisions related to all hospitals, regardless of urban or rural designation. Please note: At this time, the current Senate legislative language does not reflect a bipartisan agreement. It is expected that negotiations will continue among congressional leaders and the administration. The current bill contains \$242 billion in emergency funding to combat the COVID-19 outbreak.

IHA sent a [legislative alert](#) Friday and encourages you to reach out to Iowa's senators and your representative about the need for relief funding for hospitals.

The legislation includes other health care-related provisions:

- Increased funding to the Public Health and Social Emergency Fund by almost \$88 billion to, among other things, reimburse hospitals for COVID-19 expenses.
- Creates a Medicare add-on payment of 20% for inpatient hospital COVID-19 patients.
- Removes the Medicare sequester from May through December 2020.
- Delays Medicare disproportionate share hospital cuts by two years.
- Provides flexibility to post-acute care providers, including waiving the inpatient rehabilitation facility three-hour rule.
- Takes steps to improve the supply chain, including access to masks and drugs, among other items.
- Takes steps to expand coverage for COVID-19 testing and testing-related services.
- Provides new telehealth flexibilities.

Additional bipartisan legislation introduced to support rural hospitals

[The Immediate Relief for Rural Facilities and Providers Act](#), which provides additional support to rural hospitals and providers to keep their doors open, was introduced Sunday by U.S. senators Michael Bennet (D-CO) and John Barrasso (R-WY). The bill addresses the crisis facing rural health care providers and would provide:

- Mandatory one-time grants to CAHs and rural PPS hospitals equaling \$1,000 per patient day for three months.
- Financial stabilization for rural hospitals with a one-time grant for CAH and rural PPS hospitals equaling the total reimbursement received for services for three months to stabilize lost revenue.
- Increased Medicare reimbursements by 20% for patients in rural hospitals using the swing-bed program to incentivize freeing capacity in larger hospitals.
- One-time grant for all providers and ambulatory surgery centers equal to their payroll from Jan. 1-April 1, 2020.
- Low-interest loans through the Small Business Administration to providers and ASCs at a 0.25% interest rate that will not accrue until two years after the COVID-19 pandemic has ended.

Personal protective equipment

UIHC seeking face shields: UIHC has posted on its website a [call for donations](#) for new or used protective face shields to provide additional employees protection. Currently, UIHC says that it has a supply of face shields for staff who provide patient care or do screenings at hospital entrances but is wanting to be able to extend those protections to all employees. The health system is asking businesses and individuals to donate new or used protective face shields.

Nebraska Medicine reusing face masks: [Ultraviolet light is being used to decontaminate medical supplies](#) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. Staff began using the first decontaminated gear on Thursday.

Resource for filling provider shortages because of COVID-19

A health-tech based startup founded by medical students from the University of Iowa is offering its [online platform](#) to help connect providers/volunteers with hospitals. It has repurposed its platform to help aid hospitals requiring increased amounts of providers because of COVID-19 by:

- Hosting job needs of hospitals
- Centralizing availability of medical providers
- Connecting providers to open positions/hospitals
- **Connecting all non-medical volunteers with hospitals** (housekeeping, receptionists, cooks, etc.)

See more information [here](#).

CEO update calls

1 pm Wednesdays are our regular calls with hospital CEOs. [Click here](#) to register for the March 25 call.

IHA COVID-19 resource webpage

For current information about COVID-19, visit IHA's [coronavirus resource page](#).

Previous IHA Updates on COVID-19

[March 17 Update](#)

[March 18 Update](#)

[March 19 Update](#)

[March 20 Update](#)



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