

May 28, 2009

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Labor, HHS Appropriations
Subcommittee
S-131 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Labor, HHS Appropriations
Subcommittee
S-146A The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Harkin and Cochran

On behalf of the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health, I am writing to encourage you to fully fund the President's Fiscal Year 2010 request for State Offices of Rural Health.

As you know, the President's budget recommends a funding level of \$9,450,000 for grants to State Offices of Rural Health (SORH). This represents a slight increase in funding over the FY 2009 level of \$9.2 Million. The purpose of SORH grants is to assist States in strengthening rural health care delivery systems by maintaining a focal point for rural health within each State. State Offices of Rural Health serve as a vital link to small rural communities, helping them develop long term solutions to health problems with State and Federal resources.

Federal support for the work being done by State Offices of Rural Health have helped to:

Establish and maintain a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information on—

- (A) rural health care issues;
- (B) research findings relating to rural health care; and
- (C) innovative approaches to the delivery of health care in rural areas;

Each federal dollar invested in the State Office of Rural Health program generates \$3.00 in state generated funds that support the work of the State Offices of Rural Health. The ability to leverage the federal dollars with the state resources has been a valuable component of the State Office of Rural Health program.

Your continued support for the SORH grant program is greatly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to call on us if you need any additional information or have any questions about how the State Office of Rural Health funds are being spent in your state.

Sincerely,

Lynette Dickson
President
National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health