

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 5, 2020

Thomas J. Engels
Administrator
Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

RE: Revised Geographic Eligibility for Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Grants

Dear Administrator Engels:

We write in support of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), proposed *Revised Geographic Eligibility for Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) Grants*, as well as to offer our support for the enclosed comments from the West Virginia Primary Care Association (WVPCA).

The modifications contained in this proposal to revise FORHP's current rural definition will allow West Virginians to better access care and for our health care providers to build additional capacity in our rural areas. As you will read in the WVPCA's comments, the revised definition will affect six counties in West Virginia: Boone, Clay, Hampshire, Lincoln, Preston and Wirt that are currently unable to access FORHP funds despite having many rural characteristics and challenges.

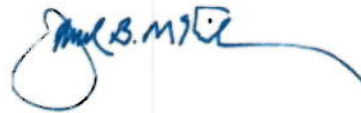
The WVPCA's comments also address other areas where additional modifications to FORHP rules would more accurately reflect West Virginia's geographic realities and the unique needs of the population in these areas. These include providing an exception for mountainous or difficult terrain and for "hub" or satellite sites that serve a majority rural population and provide critical health services but are connected to a primary location ineligible for FORHP grants.

Once again, we thank you for your attention to the needs of our rural areas. We offer our full support for the modifications to FORHP's current rural definition and believe the comments offered by WVPCA provide important additional information and recommendations that could further improve access to health care in West Virginia and across the nation.

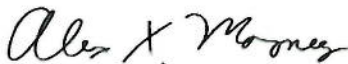
Sincerely,



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



David B. McKinley P.E.
Member of Congress



Alex X. Mooney
Member of Congress



Carol D. Miller
Member of Congress

CC: Steve Hirsch, Public Health Analyst, FORHP, HRSA