



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

August 29, 2013

Honorable Members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation,

As members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, we are writing to express our strong concerns over a recent recommendation issued by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General (OIG) regarding Critical Access Hospital (CAH) designation. **Many of our districts include one or more CAHs, which provide essential and *local* access to health care, economic security and important jobs in our rural communities. We ask for your strong support for the CAHs in your district by opposing detrimental and arbitrary mileage changes.**

Rural hospitals are often one of the largest local employers, providing family-supporting wages that ripple throughout rural communities and that generate tax revenue to support state and local services. A 2009 study, updated in 2011, by the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Wisconsin Hospital Association revealed that hospitals across the state generate \$28 billion in economic activity and employ over 100,000 people. The study found that hospitals were one of the top ten employers in 44 of Wisconsin's 72 counties and one of the top five employers in 20 counties.

The CAHs in our districts are also proud to be proactive national leaders in delivering high quality, cost efficient care, and provide a value to the Medicare program. This is evidenced by third-party research and voluntary quality reporting on Wisconsin's "CheckPoint" website, <http://www.wicheckpoint.org/index.aspx>.

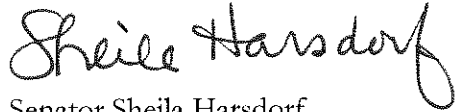
That is why we were disappointed to hear about another proposal put forth seeking to eliminate CAH designation for hospitals based on miles from another hospital. The recent OIG report recommends eliminating the CAH designation for hospitals that have been deemed by the state to be "necessary providers" but do not meet a specified distance requirement.

As you know, the CAH program was created under the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 to address the closure of hundreds of rural hospitals across the country which could not survive under Medicare's reimbursement structure. The CAH designation provided an *alternative* Medicare reimbursement structure for these small, rural hospitals—a structure that has worked extremely well for the past 20 years. **In Wisconsin, estimates are that the OIG proposal would eliminate CAH designation for 53 out of 58 of Wisconsin's CAHs. As you can imagine, the impacts of that change would be devastating to Wisconsin's Medicare beneficiaries, families and rural communities.**

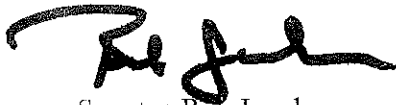
As elected officials of communities that depend heavily on CAHs for our communities' physical, mental and economic health, we ask that you oppose these detrimental mileage changes to the program.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this issue.

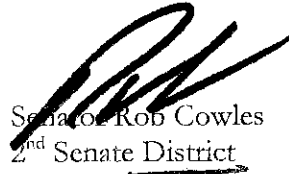
Sincerely,



Senator Sheila Harsdorf
10th Senate District



Senator Bob Jauch
25th Senate District



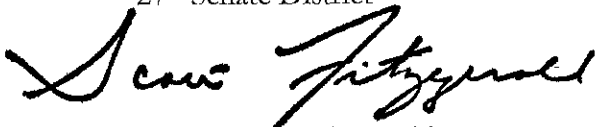
Senator Rob Cowles
2nd Senate District



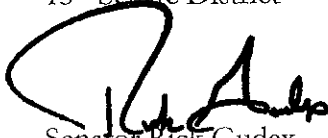
Senator Tim Cullen
15th Senate District



Senator Jon Erpenbach
27th Senate District



Senator Scott Fitzgerald
13th Senate District



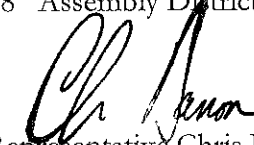
Senator Rick Gudex
18th Senate District



Senator Dan Hansen
30th Senate District



Representative Kathy Bernier
68th Assembly District



Representative Chris Danou
92nd Assembly District



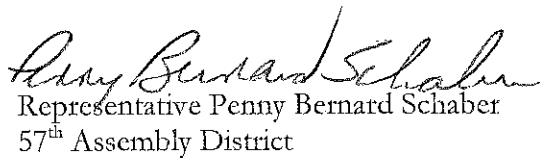
Representative Joan Ballweg
41st Assembly District



Representative Peter Barca
64th Assembly District



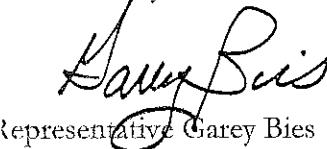
Representative Mandela Barnes
11th Assembly District



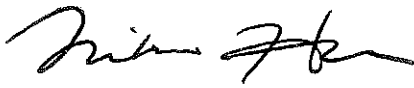
Representative Penny Bernard Schaber
57th Assembly District



Representative Janet Bewley
74th Assembly District



Representative Garey Bies
1st Assembly District



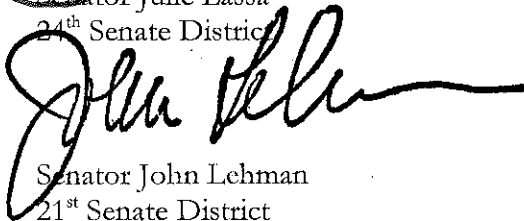
Senator Nikiya Harris
6th Senate District



Senator Chris Larson
7th Senate District



Senator Julie Lassa
24th Senate District



Senator John Lehman
21st Senate District



Senator Joe Leibham
9th Senate District



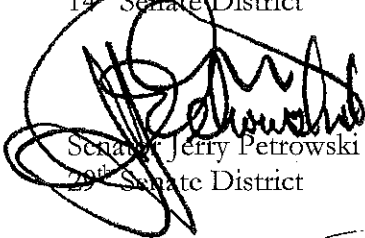
Senator Mark Miller
16th Senate District



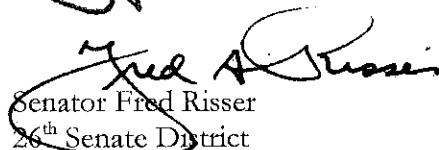
Senator Terry Moulton
23rd Senate District



Senator Luther Olsen
14th Senate District



Senator Jerry Petrowski
29th Senate District



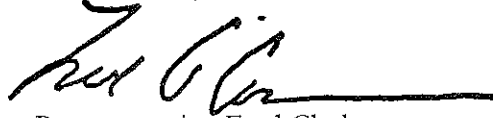
Senator Fred Risser
26th Senate District



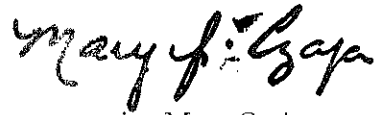
Representative Jill Billings
95th Assembly District



Representative Ed Brooks
50th Assembly District



Representative Fred Clark
81st Assembly District



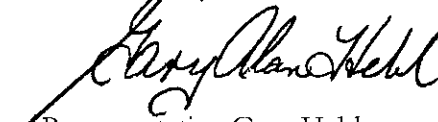
Representative Mary Czaja
35th Assembly District



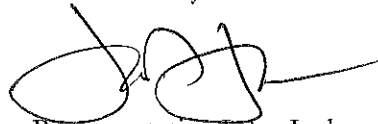
Representative Steve Doyle
94th Assembly District



Representative Evan Goyke
18th Assembly District



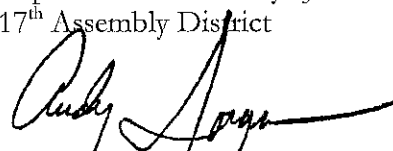
Representative Gary Hebl
46th Assembly District




Representative John Jagler
37th Assembly District




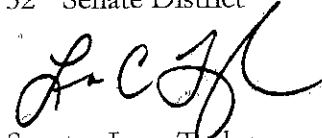
Representative LaTonya Johnson
17th Assembly District





Representative Andy Jorgensen
43rd Assembly District



Senator Dale Schultz
17th Senate District



Senator Jennifer Shilling
32nd Senate District



Senator Lena Taylor
4th Senate District



Senator Tom Tiffany
12th Senate District

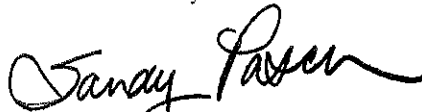

Senator Kathleen Vinehout
31st Senate District


Senator Robert Wirth
22nd Senate District

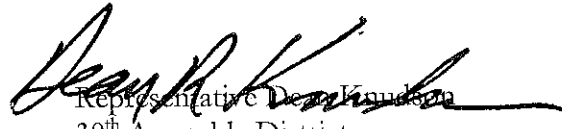

Representative Jeffrey Mursau
36th Assembly District



Representative Lee Nerison
96th Assembly District



Representative Tod Ohnstad
65th Assembly District



Representative Sandy Pasch
10th Assembly District


Representative Robb Kahl
47th Assembly District

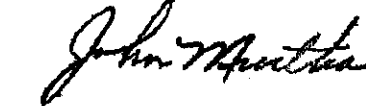

Representative Dean Knudson
30th Assembly District

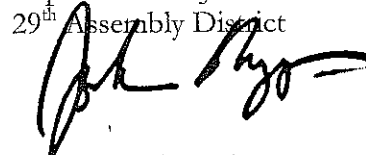

Representative Tom Larson
67th Assembly District



Representative Howard Marklein
51st Assembly District



Representative Cory Mason
66th Assembly District

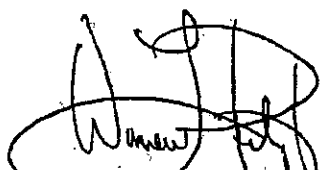

Representative Nick Milroy
73rd Assembly District


Representative John Murtha
29th Assembly District

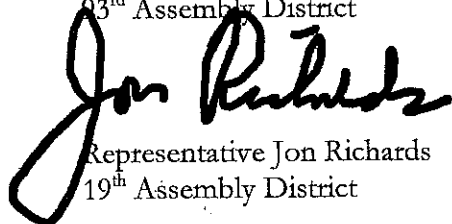

Representative John Nygren
89th Assembly District


Representative Al Ott
3rd Assembly District

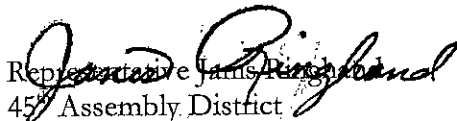

Representative Kevin Petersen
40th Assembly District



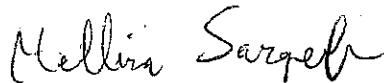
Representative Warren Petryk
93rd Assembly District



Representative Jon Richards
19th Assembly District



Representative James Ringland
45th Assembly District



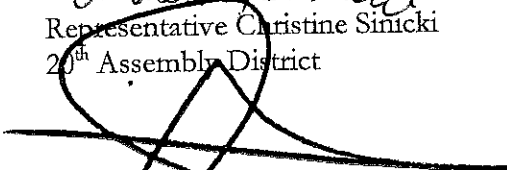
Representative Melissa Sargent
48th Assembly District



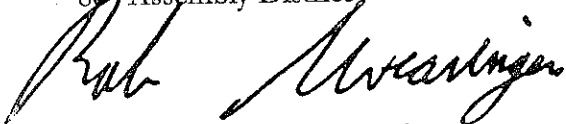
Representative Erik Severson
28th Assembly District



Representative Christine Sinicki
20th Assembly District



Representative John Spiros
86th Assembly District



Representative Rob Swearingen
34th Assembly District



Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt
52nd Assembly District



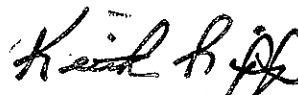
Representative Travis Tranel
49th Assembly District



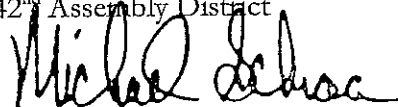
Representative Sondy Pope
80th Assembly District



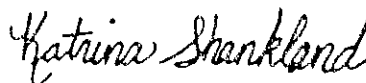
Representative Daniel Riemer
7th Assembly District



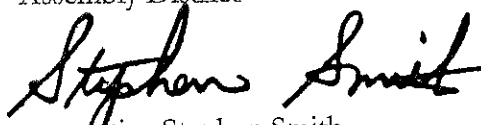
Representative Keith Ripp
42nd Assembly District



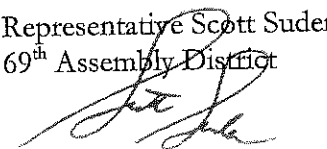
Representative Michael Schraa
53rd Assembly District




Representative Katrina Shankland
71st Assembly District



Representative Stephen Smith
75th Assembly District



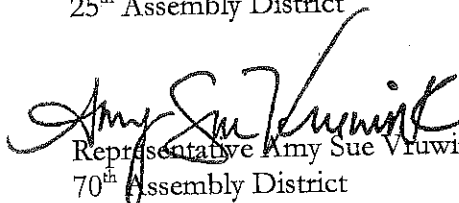
Representative Scott Suder
69th Assembly District



Representative Gary Tauchen
6th Assembly District

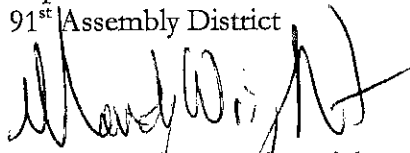


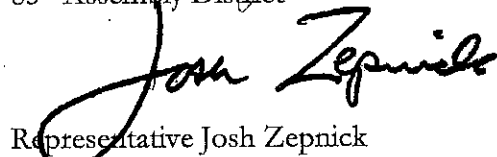
Representative Paul Tittel
25th Assembly District

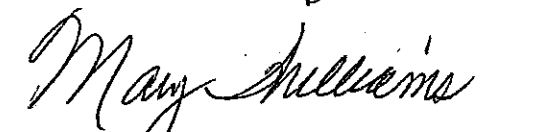


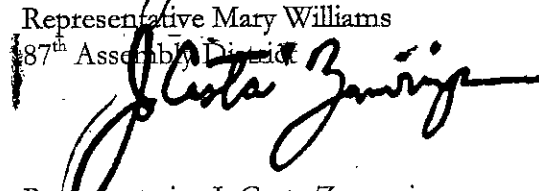
Representative Amy Sue Vruwink
70th Assembly District


Representative Dana Wachs
91st Assembly District


Representative Mandy Wright
85th Assembly District


Representative Josh Zepnick
9th Assembly District


Representative Mary Williams
87th Assembly District


Representative JoCasta Zamarripa
8th Assembly District

CC:

Michael Karuschak - Chief Executive Officer, Amery Regional Medical Center, Amery
David Schneider - Executive Director, Langlade Hospital - An Aspirus Partner, Antigo
Alison Page - Chief Executive Officer, Baldwin Area Medical Center, Baldwin
Rita Sullivan - Vice President-Regional Site, Mayo Health System - Northland, Barron
John Feeney - President/CEO, Berlin Memorial Hospital, Berlin
Mary Beth White-Jacobs - President and CEO, Black River Memorial Hospital, Black River Falls
Edward Wittrock - Hospital Administrator, Mayo Health System - Chippewa Valley, Bloomer
David Hartberg - CEO, Boscobel Area Health Care, Boscobel
Tim Richman - Hospital Administrator, Calumet Medical Center, Chilton
John Russell - President and CEO, Columbus Community Hospital, Columbus
Mike Gutsch - CEO, Cumberland Memorial Hospital, Cumberland
Julie Chikowski - CEO, Memorial Hospital of Lafayette Co., Darlington
Lisa Schnelder - President & CEO, Upland Hills Health, Dodgeville
Douglas Peterson - President and Chief Executive Officer, Chippewa Valley Hospital, Durand
Sheila Clough - President, Ministry Eagle River Memorial Hospital, Eagle River
James Pernau - Chief Executive Officer, Edgerton Hospital and Health Services, Edgerton
Jeremy Normington - CEO, Moundview Memorial Hospital & Clinics, Friendship
Gordon Lewis - Chief Executive Officer, Burnett Medical Center, Grantsburg
Tim Gullingsrud - Chief Executive Officer, Hayward Area Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home, Hayward
Debra Smith - Chief Executive Officer, St. Joseph's Community Health Services, Hillsboro
Marian Furlong - President/CEO, Hudson Hospital & Clinics, Hudson
Jeni Hallatt - Hospital Administrator, Mercy Walworth Hospital and Medical Center, Lake Geneva
Nicole Clapp - President and Chief Executive Officer, Grant Regional Health Center, Lancaster
Steve Lindberg - Chief Administrative Officer, Mayo Health System - Red Cedar, Menomonie
Mary Krueger - President, Ministry Good Samaritan Health Center, Merrill
David Baltzer - Administrator and CEO, Memorial Medical Center - Neillsville, Neillsville
William Schmidt - President and Chief Executive Officer, New London Family Medical Center, New London
Steven Massey - President and CEO, Westfields Hospital, New Richmond
Chris Woleske - CEO, Oconto Hospital & Medical Center, Oconto
Dan DeGroot - Chief Executive Officer, Community Memorial Hospital, Oconto Falls
Jeffrey Meyer - Chief Executive Officer, Osceola Medical Center, Osceola
Dean Eide - VP, Administration, Mayo Health System - Oakridge in Osseo, Osseo

Dan Rohrbach - Chief Executive Officer, Southwest Health Center, Platteville
William Sexton - Chief Executive Officer, Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital, Prairie Du Chien
Bob Van Meeteren - President, Reedsburg Area Medical Center, Reedsburg
Mike Delfs - CEO, Richland Hospital, The, Richland Center
Katherine Vergos - Chief Operating Officer, Ripon Medical Center, Ripon
David R Miller - President, River Falls Area Hospital, River Falls
Dorothy Erdmann - President, Shawano Medical Center, Shawano
Paul Naglosky - Hospital Administration, Indianhead Medical Center, Shell Lake
Kim Hawthorne - President, Mayo Health System - Franciscan Healthcare, Sparta
Michael Schafer - Chief Executive Officer, Spooner Health System, Spooner
David Dobosenski - Hospital Administration, St. Croix Regional Medical Center, St. Croix Falls
Cynthia Eichman - President/CEO, Ministry Our Lady of Victory Hospital, Stanley
Terrence Brenny - President/CEO, Stoughton Hospital Association, Stoughton
Terry Jacobson - CEO, St. Mary's Hospital of Superior, Superior
Philip Stuart - CEO, Tomah Memorial Hospital, Tomah
Monica Hilt - Regional CEO, Ministry Sacred Heart Hospital, Tomahawk
Kyle Bakkum - CEO, Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Viroqua
Craig Kantos - CEO, Riverside Medical Center, Waupaca
DeAnn Thurmer - Chief Operating Officer, Waupun Memorial Hospital, Waupun
Brian Theiler - Chief Executive Officer, Tri-County Memorial Hospital, Whitehall
Donald Caves - CEO, Wild Rose Community Memorial Hospital, Wild Rose