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Congress Passes and President Signs Funding Package with Key Health Care Extenders

On February 3, the U.S. House of Representatives passed and President Trump signed an appropriations package to fund the federal government, ending a 4-day partial shutdown. As covered in a recent edition of *The Valued Voice*, the package includes funding for key WHA-supported health care extender provisions, including:

- Funding for Medicare-Dependent and Low-Volume Hospitals through the end of 2026.
- Funding for telehealth waivers through the end of 2027.
- Funding for the Hospital at Home program through the end of 2030.

Unfortunately, the package also includes a provision requiring each off-campus hospital outpatient department (HOPD) to be assigned a separate, unique health identifier as a Medicare condition of payment. WHA and the American Hospital Association has argued this is unnecessary and duplicative because service codes already differentiate the place of service for such locations.

With the recent history of short-term extensions providing uncertainty for hospitals, particularly with telehealth and the Hospital at Home program, WHA had been advocating for longer-term extensions to minimize disruptions in care that result during or approaching government shutdowns. WHA was pleased to see Congress recognize this with a 2-year extension for telehealth and a 5-year extension for the hospital-at-home program. WHA was also pleased to see retroactive funding included back to the start of the shutdown for some of these programs.

Contact WHA's VP Federal Affairs and Advocacy Jon Hoelter with questions.

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EDUCATION EVENTS

Feb. 10, 2026

Age-Friendly Webinar Series Featuring Advocate Health

Feb. 23, 2026

Nursing Services Conditions of Participation

Feb. 25, 2026

2026 Advocacy Day