

May 7, 2024

The Honorable Peter Welch
United States Senate
124 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jacky Rosen
United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable J.D. Vance
United States Senate
288 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin Cramer
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Welch, Vance, Rosen and Cramer:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, our clinician partners — including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers — and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) writes in support of the Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act of 2024 (S. 3565). This bill will play a critical role in bridging the “digital divide” and supporting continued access to health care services for millions of Americans, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a benefit program run by the Federal Communications Commission that provides eligible households with benefits of \$30 discounts per month toward internet service and up to \$75 per month for households in qualifying tribal lands. The ACP has enabled over 23 million households to stay connected to the internet. While the ACP extends beyond health care, the provisions can support patients’ access to certain services like telehealth visits, hospital at home, patient portals and electronic patient records, virtual scheduling, and remote patient monitoring — which are not possible without reliable internet. Without congressional action, ACP benefits will decrease down to a partial benefit of \$14 in May before completely expiring in June.

We commend you for including \$7 billion of supplemental funding for the ACP to ensure that patients do not lose access to their reliable, high-speed internet. This legislation is also critical in continuing efforts to reduce disparities and advance health equity by

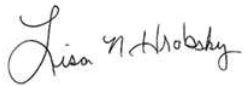


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giving patients in rural and underserved areas the necessary resources to utilize various forms of telehealth, as well as other digital health services.

We appreciate your strong leadership on this important issue and look forward to working together to ensure passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Kidder Hrobsky".

Lisa Kidder Hrobsky
Senior Vice President
Advocacy and Political Affairs