

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

***Support Rural Health Clinics on National Rural Health Day***

November 17, 2011

Dear Colleague:

Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) were created to address physician understaffing in rural areas and improve access to primary care services. RHCs use a team-based approach of physicians and midlevel medical providers, such as Nurse Practitioners and Physicians Assistants, to provide a variety of health care services.

Today, we are introducing no-cost legislation to correct current law so RHC providers can be eligible for electronic health record (EHR) incentive payments through the Medicare program. Due to the unique reimbursement structure of RHCs, their healthcare providers are not eligible for EHR incentive payments. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) are the entity charged with the development of EHR meaningful user criteria. Unfortunately, their flawed methodology has lead to RHCs becoming excluded from the EHR incentive payments, despite the fact that they provide quality health care to Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas.

The last year an eligible provider can start participation in the Medicare EHR incentive program is 2014. Therefore, it is imperative for Congress to quickly level the playing field for health care providers who choose to practice medicine in RHCs.

This bill:

- Amends current law to allow RHCs to qualify for EHR incentive bonuses

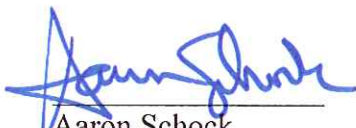
It **does not**:

- Cost the federal government a dime
- Create a new grant program
- Provide additional funding for RHCs
- Change CMS' meaningful user requirements

RHCs should not be discriminated against simply because they bill Medicare differently than hospitals or other health care practitioners who practice in rural areas. Help end this inequity by cosponsoring this legislation.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation or have additional questions, please contact Margie Almanza with Aaron Schock's office, at x.5-6201 or [margie.almanza@mail.house.gov](mailto:margie.almanza@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



Aaron Schock  
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress



Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress