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MICHIGAN SENATE
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October 22, 2025

Elizabeth Hertel, Director
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
333 S. Grand Avenue
Lansing, MI 48913

Dear Director Hertel,

I am writing today to urge the department to direct the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) funds toward Michigan's rural hospitals as President Trump intended with the One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBA). This funding is critical as these are the institutions that anchor healthcare delivery and economic stability in our small towns and communities.

As someone who grew up on a sixth-generation dairy and grape farm in Southwest Michigan, I've witnessed firsthand how rural hospitals serve as both the front line of emergency response and are a dependable partner in local communities. They are often some of the largest employers in a region, while also serving as the only point of healthcare access for miles. Yet, these same hospitals are operating under unsustainable pressures — overregulation, workforce shortages, rising costs, outdated infrastructure and ineffective government reimbursement.

President Trump's RHTP represents a historic opportunity to address these challenges directly. The funds should be used to:

- Recruit and retain rural health professionals with a focus on behavioral health, maternal care and primary care.
- Support our rural communities so that government reimbursement reflects the true cost of maintaining essential service lines.
- Invest in modern technology, including telehealth capacity, remote patient monitoring and interoperability — the infrastructure that allows rural hospitals to coordinate care efficiently and safely.

A community without a hospital creates areas of our state that are not set up to thrive; it loses both access to care and its ability to attract families, businesses and future investment. I stand ready to assist the Department of Health and Human Services in completing their application to maximize Michigan's share of rural health funding. Michigan cannot waste this opportunity by focusing on woke policies or government bureaucracy that doesn't help real people. President Trump's intent is clear – this money needs to support rural hospitals.

I respectfully urge MDHHS to ensure that RHTP dollars are directed to stabilize and strengthen hospitals. The health of rural Michigan depends on it.

Thank you for your leadership and continued partnership in protecting access to care for every Michigander, no matter where they live.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aric Nesbitt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Senator Aric Nesbitt
Republican Leader, 20th District