



Physicians Caring for Texans

February 14, 2022

The Honorable Colin Allred
Room 114 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Allred;

On behalf of our more than 56,000 Texas physician and medical student members, the Texas Medical Association (TMA) writes asking you to support and cosponsor the Small Practice, Underserved, and Rural Support Program Extension Act of 2022 (SURS Extension Act).

This bipartisan bill, introduced by U.S. Sens. Bill Cassidy, MD (R-La.), and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), and U.S. Reps. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) and Michael Burgess, MD (R-Texas), reauthorizes the Small, Underserved, and Rural Support program, which assists small, underserved, and rural health care practices with Medicare's Quality Payment Program (QPP). The SURS program is scheduled to end on Feb. 15, 2022, unless Congress intervenes.

The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 established QPP and funded the SURS program, a technical assistance program for Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS)-eligible professionals in practices of 15 or fewer such professionals. Instead of this important program ending in 2022, the SURS Extension Act extends the program until 2027. This would help small practices in rural and underserved areas succeed in the MIPS program.

Given that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services recently announced that fewer clinicians participated in QPP in 2020 and fewer of those who did earned incentive payments compared with 2019, the extension of SURS is needed.

TMA appreciates the opportunity to support this bill. We call on you to support its immediate passage. If you have questions, please contact Clayton Stewart, TMA vice president of public affairs and chief lobbyist, at (512) 370-1365 or clayton.stewart@texmed.org.

Sincerely,

E. Linda Villarreal, MD
President, Texas Medical Association