

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2022

The Honorable Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure,

We are writing today to draw your attention to a proposal prepared by Georgia Medicaid in partnership with two of Georgia's leading safety net health systems: Augusta University Health System and Grady Health System. These two providers have put forward an innovative approach to transforming the way hospitals address health equity and deliver quality care at these historic institutions. The proposal – in the form of a directed payment pre-print – titled *Georgia Advancing Innovation to Deliver Equity* (GA-AIDE), is currently pending CMS review and we encourage your support for this proposal.

COVID-19 has had a severe impact on the communities these facilities serve, which are majority minority areas that even prior to the pandemic faced enormous health equity challenges in the form of access to basic care. Unfortunately, Georgia lags behind the rest of the nation in maternal and child health, behavioral and substance use disorder treatment, and heart health. As the two Georgia Senators, we have made addressing these disparities, particularly for minority communities, a top priority and have challenged Georgia's health care system to meet these challenges head on with innovative ideas.


We believe GA-AIDE takes an important step in rising to that challenge. The proposal supports care transformation and improved health equity by providing payments to safety-net hospitals supporting investments in innovative programs required to improve quality of care and health outcomes for Georgians. The programs are centered on the following core areas:

- Children's and Women's Health
- Preventing and reducing the impact of chronic conditions
- Improved access to screening and prevention services
- Addressing health equity

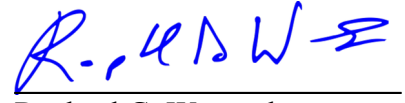
If approved, these enhanced payments would result in more than \$300 million invested back into the health systems – allowing them to develop and expand innovative approaches to delivering care and improved outcomes to Georgia's most vulnerable populations. The GA-AIDE program is designed to recognize value over volume. This is done by tying ten percent of payments to improved performance on quality outcomes and reporting stratified by race and ethnicity as a starting point to assess improved health equity.

We look forward to working with you to address the disparities that exist in caring for Georgia's Medicaid population and encourage your support for this proposal. We stand ready to assist you and your team in any way that we can.

Sincerely,



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Raphael G. Warnock
United States Senator