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A healthcare organization of VHA

Date: February 22, 2013

To: House Appropriations Committee Members

From: Tom Bell, Executive Director of Governmental  
and Public Relations, Salina Regional Health Center

RE: HCR 5013 – Prohibiting Medicaid Expansion

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on behalf of Salina Regional and our area community hospitals.

Salina Regional is a not-for-profit community hospital serving North Central Kansas. In Fiscal Year 2012, Salina Regional provided more than \$8.4 million in charity care to uninsured patients. Those dollars now are unavailable for investment in medical staff, equipment and infrastructure to serve our community and the region.

Caring for the uninsured is our mission as a community hospital. But Medicaid expansion would help ease this financial burden and allow more investment in community health care.

Medicaid expansion also would help offset upcoming reductions in reimbursements from the Affordable Care Act and federal sequester cuts. If we do not have offsetting funding, then these reductions will force us to limit patient services. The ACA cuts also mean the loss of jobs for Salina Regional, which is Saline County's second-largest employer.

Of equal concern to Salina Regional is the financial impact these changes mean to Critical Access Hospitals in our region. CAHs provide essential health care services in their communities and are key in providing the right care, in the right place and at the right time.

New information regarding Medicaid expansion appears daily, such as projections on financial consequences of ACA implementation, and developments on the national scene as states struggle with this question. Consider Wednesday's news that Florida Governor Rick Scott is backing Medicaid expansion. He has been highly critical of the ACA, yet he joins six other Republican governors who are expanding access to Medicaid.

Salina Regional respectfully asks Committee members to consider the financial consequences of prohibiting Medicaid expansion, and asks that further action be delayed until more can be learned about its impact on Kansas, community hospitals and the patients we serve.