



Hospital
Association
of Oregon

HB 4047 - Rural Emergency Hospital designation

Oregon's rural hospitals need every option on the table to serve their communities

Rural Emergency Hospitals are a designation type established by Congress through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 to address concerns over rural hospital closures and provide rural hospitals with a potential alternative to closure.

The Rural Emergency Hospital designation can be a lifeline

The purpose of the Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) designation is to maintain access to lifesaving emergency hospital services, observation care, and outpatient services in communities that can no longer sustain a critical access hospital or other specified small rural hospitals.

How it works

REHs must meet federal requirements:

The REH designation is administered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). REHs must meet federal requirements and have a transfer agreement in effect with a Level I or Level II trauma center.

Medicare-covered REH services include all covered outpatient department services required or elected to be provided by the REH, including relevant radiology, laboratory, outpatient rehabilitation, surgical, maternal health, and behavioral health. An REH cannot have inpatient beds, except those furnished as part of a distinct unit licensed as a skilled nursing facility.

Only specified rural hospitals are eligible to convert to REH designation: Only critical access hospitals and specified other small rural hospitals with fewer than 50 beds that were open as of Dec. 27, 2020, are eligible to convert to this designation.



Why Oregon needs a Rural Emergency Hospital designation

Hospitals need every option on the table to keep their doors open. Rural hospitals are often the cornerstone of their communities. They are job creators, keeping their doors open 24/7 so they can be there when their communities need them most. In rural Oregon, where the closure of a hospital will mean long travel times for emergency care, it is particularly critical to protect emergency services.

The legislature needs to act now before it's too late



While Congress created the REH designation, each state legislature must take action to allow REH licensing. So far, 18 states including Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Montana, Nevada, and Nebraska have established their own REH licensing processes.

Oregon can't afford to wait. The legislature needs to act now to support rural hospitals and Oregonians' access to emergency services in rural communities.

Vote yes on HB 4047
to protect access to health care
in rural Oregon communities.