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**Statement from THA President and CEO Craig Becker on
Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015**

“The Tennessee Hospital Association (THA) supports H.R. 2, the U.S. House of Representatives’ bipartisan package known as the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, to permanently repeal the Medicare physician Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR). We are especially relieved by this solution because the 17 short-term SGR fixes over the past few years have nearly all included cuts to hospitals and other providers. These fixes typically were less than a year each and this bill draws these short-term solutions to an end.

“Of special note for Tennessee’s hospitals is the H.R. 2 provision to provide 10 years of funding for our state’s Medicaid disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments, which is critically needed and somewhat levels the playing field in comparison to the Medicaid DSH resources our neighboring states receive. We also are happy to see funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and community health centers are both included in the package.

“Obviously, we would prefer hospitals to not be part of the offsets to help pay for the package. At the same time, we realize that if this deal falls through and Congress must consider another one-year SGR delay, then cuts to providers still will be in play to pay for a useless additional one-year delay.

“THA strongly prefers a permanent SGR fix and appreciates this unique moment in time for Tennessee’s DSH payment. Therefore, we give our full support to this bill. Most important, we are grateful for efforts to bring equity to hospital payments for Tennessee. I applaud the commitment and hard work of Tennessee’s congressional delegation on this issue.”

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