

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 1, 2026

The Honorable Mehmet Oz, M.D.
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dr. Administrator Oz,

Thanks to the largest investment in rural health care in history from the *Working Families Tax Cuts Act*, Iowa's Healthy Hometowns program is making bold progress in rural health care. Under Governor Reynolds' leadership, Iowa wasted no time in investing these dollars directly into rural health care. In January, Iowa became the first state in the nation to award Rural Health Transformation Program funding as part of its Healthy Hometowns initiative,¹ and it has ensured resources are going directly to rural communities, not bureaucrats.² In year one of the program, Iowa's \$209 million federal investment is improving cancer prevention and treatment, workforce recruitment and retention, chronic disease care, and maternal and child health.

As we each travel throughout Iowa, visiting hospitals, health centers, clinics, and more, we witness firsthand how these investments are making a difference toward the health, well-being, and quality of life in rural communities. During your visit to the University of Iowa in May, you learned how our state is using telehealth and a hub-and-spoke model to increase access to care and improve health outcomes in our rural communities. Here are a few of the countless examples of Iowans benefiting from these Rural Health Transformation Program investments:

- Lucas County Health Center in Chariton is purchasing its first-ever MRI machine to bring early detection cancer screenings to residents,³
- Mahaska Health in Oskaloosa is purchasing a new PET/CT system with cardiac imaging capability and recruiting an OB/GYN and a general surgeon physician assistant,⁴

¹ Office of Governor Kim Reynolds, "Iowa first in the nation to award Rural Health Transformation Program funding," January 30, 2026, <https://governor.iowa.gov/press-release/2026-01-30/iowa-first-nation-award-rural-health-transformation-program-funding>.

² Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, page 59, "Iowa Rural Health Transformation Program (Healthy Hometowns) Project Narrative," <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/17491/download?inline>.

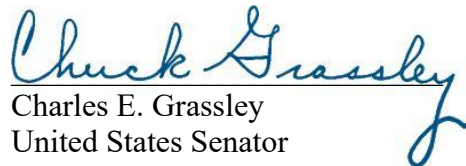
³ Office of Senator Charles E. Grassley, "Q&A: Cancer in Iowa," May 8, 2026, <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/qanda-cancer-in-iowa>.

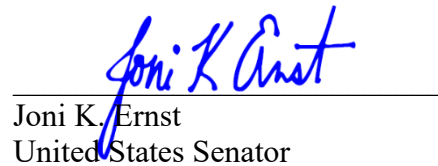
⁴ Mahaska Health, "Mahaska Health Awarded \$3.3 Million in Rural Health Transformation Funding," February 3, 2026, <https://www.mahaskahealth.org/blog/2026/02/03/mahaska-health-awarded-3-3-million-in-rural-health-transformation-funding/>.

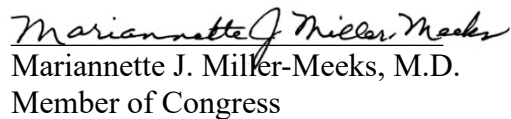
- North Iowa Medical Center in Mason City is purchasing a new robotic bronchoscopy system that detects lung cancer earlier than previously possible,⁵
- Sioux Center Health in Sioux Center is expanding prenatal care through a new regional maternal health coordinator,⁶
- Washington County Hospital in Washington is purchasing a new CT scanner that is improving diagnostic capabilities and patient outcomes for the community,⁷ and
- Wayne County Hospital in Corydon is standing up a radiation oncology center and will be serving as a combat cancer health hub.⁸

As the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services consider Iowa's fiscal year 2027 Rural Health Transformation Program funding, we request your agency give the state of Iowa's request full and fair consideration. We appreciate your leadership and partnership in this effort and stand ready to continue this historic progress for rural health care.

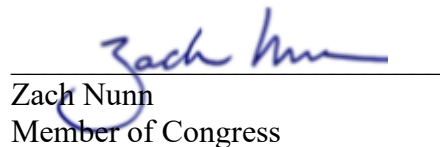
Sincerely,

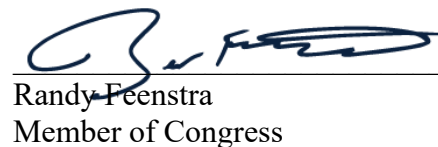

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator


Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator


Mariannette J. Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress


Ashley Hinson
Member of Congress


Zach Nunn
Member of Congress


Randy Feenstra
Member of Congress

⁵ Senator Charles E. Grassley, *The Gazette*, "Rural Health Fund is improving access to care in Iowa," May 7, 2026, https://www.thegazette.com/opinion/guest-columnists/rural-health-fund-is-improving-access-to-care-in-iowa/article_dfl1423a-088b-49b7-8ac5-3f83ace459ff.html.

⁶ Sioux Center Health, "New Regional Maternal Health Coordinator brings continuity, connection to families," September 2026, <https://www.siouxcenterhealth.org/news/regional-maternal-health-coordinator>.

⁷ Office of Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks, "Miller-Meeks and E&C Chairman Guthrie Tour Washington County Hospital, Highlight Rural Health Transformation Progress," June 23, 2026, <https://millermeeks.house.gov/media/press-releases/miller-meeks-and-ec-chairman-guthrie-tour-washington-county-hospital-highlight>.

⁸ Office of Representative Zach Nunn, "Nunn Breaks Ground on Wayne County Hospital Dialysis Center, Hosts Rural Health Care Roundtable," August 11, 2026, <https://nunn.house.gov/2026/08/11/nunn-breaks-ground-on-wayne-county-hospital-dialysis-center-hosts-rural-health-care-roundtable/>.