



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHA Responds to Governor's Plans for Hospital Task Force

Wallingford, Connecticut, April 18, 2007 - Today Governor M. Jodi Rell announced that she is forming a task force to develop strategies to stabilize and chart the future course of hospitals in Connecticut, many of which are facing financial hardship.

Connecticut hospitals appreciate the Governor's focus on Connecticut hospitals and are pleased that Governor Rell has made the long-term financial stability of hospitals a priority. Her recognition that hospitals' problems today will be the State's healthcare crises tomorrow and her support for addressing those problems in a comprehensive way is essential to ensuring that Connecticut residents have access to the level of care they have come to expect - and deserve.

An immediate and critical first step in helping hospitals as this strategy development process gets under way, is for the Governor to support full funding to hospitals during this 2007 budget negotiation process for the care they provide to patients in the state Medicaid and SAGA programs. Such support will go a long way toward beginning to effectively address the issues identified by the Governor in her announcement. CHA and its hospitals are looking forward to working with the Governor to address the related issues of healthcare workforce shortages, emergency room overcrowding, and the chronic issues related to the availability of community services for children and adults with mental health needs.

We expect this study will build on the substantial work already summarized in two reports issued in January by the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee on the funding of hospital care in Connecticut, and by the Office of Health Care Access on the financial status of Connecticut's hospitals. Both government entities determined that Connecticut hospitals are in increasingly fragile financial condition. Connecticut hospitals are gratified that the members of the Legislature are taking a significant first step toward paying hospitals the cost of providing care to patients covered by State programs through their Legislative budget proposal, which begins to address the precarious financial situation of hospitals and other healthcare providers caused by government underpayments for care provided to individuals enrolled in the Medicaid and SAGA programs.

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