

Rural Health Training Act of 2021 (RHTA)

Issue: The COVID-19 pandemic has left rural hospitals, rural health clinics, and community health clinics in desperate need of well-trained medical staff. Even before the pandemic many rural providers were struggling to find qualified medical staff who wanted to work in remote areas. With the onset of the pandemic, the situation has become more dire. Many hospitals are resorting to high-cost travel nurses to fill the gap. This is a practice that leads to both a shortage of staff nurses and higher healthcare prices for the consumer.

Solution: *The Rural Health Training Act of 2021* is a simple straightforward solution to the workforce shortage rural healthcare providers face. This bipartisan bill will afford healthcare providers the opportunity to train members of their own community in non-physician, healthcare roles. This will increase community investment in their healthcare system, providing good-paying, stable jobs, and decreasing the need for healthcare providers to rely on travel staff.

Specifically, *The Rural Health Training Act of 2021*:

- \$100 million over 10 years to establish a grant program through the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) to assist rural providers in training existing staff in non-physician medical positions.
- Eligible entities include rural hospitals, rural health clinics, or community health centers.
- Grants may used for healthcare training, childcare during training, and transportation to training.
- Requires trainees to serve no less than five years at facility that provided training.

The Rural Health Training Act of 2021 is supported by the National Rural Health Care Association, America's Essential Hospitals, American Occupational Therapy Association, American Physical Therapy Association, and the State & Regional Associations of Community Health Centers.