

AHA shares views on deficit-reduction plans with Congress

The AHA strongly opposes efforts to further cut Medicare and Medicaid payments for hospital services, the AHA said in a [statement](#) submitted to the Senate Finance Committee for a [hearing](#) today on health care entitlement programs. “The deficit-reduction plans offered thus far fail to consider an important reality: America’s hospitals already are absorbing \$155 billion in payment reductions,” AHA wrote. Any additional cuts to hospitals “could negatively impact patient care: services eliminated; longer waits for care; emergency departments shut down; and staffing reduced,” the association said. President Obama has appointed Vice President Biden to lead a group of House and Senate lawmakers to develop a deficit reduction package, which could draw from a menu of options proposed by others. Many of those proposals include arbitrary spending caps or targets that would result in across-the-board cuts to health care. “We oppose the use of a trigger that could impede patients’ access to care and further exacerbate the ‘cost-shift,’ which would increase health care costs to employers and other purchasers of private coverage,” AHA told the committee.