

UPDATE



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Neurosurgeons Urge Congress to Lift Ban on Physician-Led Hospitals

More competition from physician-led hospitals offers a solution to address health care access challenges.

Washington, DC—Today, the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) announced their strong support of the bipartisan Physician Led and Rural Access to Quality Care Act ([H.R. 9001](#)). Introduced by **Michael C. Burgess**, MD, (R-Texas), **Tony Cárdenas** (D-Calif.), **Morgan Griffith** (R-Va.), and **Vicente Gonzalez** (D-Texas), this bill would establish exceptions to rules for physician-owned hospitals in rural areas.

The AANS and the CNS joined 84 organizations in a [letter](#) from the Physician-Led Hospitals of America (PHA) supporting H.R. 9001. The bill would increase access to health care in rural areas by establishing exceptions to rules for physician-owned hospitals in rural areas. The exception would allow physician ownership in rural hospitals for hospitals that are more than a 35-mile drive from a main patient campus of the hospital or critical access hospital.

Physician-led hospitals have been shown to provide high-quality care at lower costs compared to other hospitals, according to the PHA letter. More competition from physician-led hospitals offers a solution to combat consolidation and address access challenges so that patients have additional choices for timely, high-quality care. The bill removes a ban that prevents existing physician-owned hospitals from expanding. This would allow grandfathered physician-led hospitals to meet their community's needs and expand.

“For too long, physician-owned hospitals have been restricted from expanding,” said **Russell R. Lonser**, MD, FAANS, chair of the AANS/CNS Washington Committee. “There is no sound rationale for restricting physicians from owning hospitals. Congress should act to bring back competition and pass the Physician Led and Rural Access to Quality Care Act (H.R. 9001).”

The AANS and the CNS also support the Patient Access to Higher Quality Health Care Act ([S. 470/H.R. 977](#)). Introduced in the Senate by Sen. **James Lankford** (R-Okla.) and in the House by Reps. **Michael C. Burgess**, MD, (R-Texas) and **Henry Cuellar** (D-Texas), the bill would repeal the Affordable Care Act's ban on physician-owned hospitals, enhancing patient choice and improving competition in the health care marketplace.

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The American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), founded in 1931, and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS), founded in 1951, are the two largest scientific and educational associations for neurosurgical professionals in the world. These groups represent over 10,000 neurosurgeons worldwide. Neurological surgery is the medical specialty concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders that affect the entire nervous system, including the spinal column, spinal cord, brain and peripheral nerves. For more information, please visit www.aans.org, www.cns.org and www.neurosurgery.org.