

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMERCE  
HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

361

May 27, 2021

Ms. Jessica Rosenworcel  
Acting Chair  
Federal Communications Commission  
45 L St. NE  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: FCC COVID-19 Telehealth Grant - Gundersen Health System

Dear Chairperson Rosenworcel:

I am pleased to support the application of Gundersen Health System (GHS) to receive a COVID-19 Telehealth Program grant through the second-round Federal Communications Commission (FCC) funding opportunity.

GHS is comprised of Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin and critical access hospitals (CAHs), serving underrepresented individuals in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Since March 2020, the challenges presented to GHS and their network of CAHs by the COVID-19 pandemic have been substantial. Undeterred, GHS made critical investments in telehealth and continued to provide integrated care to thousands of patients. In 2020, these investments in telehealth platforms allowed GHS to conduct over 195,000 audio and virtual visits. An estimated 63,000 rural patients received care, an opportunity not possible without the telehealth platforms.

As the current public health crisis continues, telehealth remains a crucial frontline resource for providers to deliver care to patients. GHS seeks FCC COVID-19 Telehealth funds to recover costs they incurred to bolster their Telemedicine program and provide access to patients in the midst of this pandemic. Grant funds will support the GHS network, further preparing them to continue to provide telehealth at a significant rate to patients, substantially reducing the need for in-person appointments in rural areas. As a system delivering care to rural populations across three states, this funding is critical to ensuring access to continued care in an increasingly virtual world.

I strongly support funding for projects that expand access to quality, affordable health care in rural and underserved communities. For this reason, I request full and fair consideration be given to the application of Gundersen Health System. Please keep my staff informed on the progress of this application. They can be reached by email at [projects\\_grants@baldwin.senate.gov](mailto:projects_grants@baldwin.senate.gov) or by calling 608-264-5338. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of my request.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator