

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Administrator Oz:

The Arizona delegation writes to endorse and support Arizona's participation in the Rural Health Transformation Program, and to ensure that Arizona receives the funds it requires to address the significant healthcare challenges facing its rural communities.

Arizona's rural population is very dispersed, averaging 7.69 people per square mile. Arizona is the sixth-largest state in land area. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), specifically the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP), uses a detailed, multi-criteria definition to determine which areas are rural. Seven of Arizona's fifteen counties are classified as 100 percent rural. Each of Arizona's counties contains census tracts that meet HRSA's definition of rural.

Arizona is vast and contains mountainous regions, forests, and sweeping deserts. The rugged terrain can make it difficult for some Arizonans to travel even short distances for healthcare. Roughly 27 percent of the state's land area is Tribal land; Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized Tribes. Many of the Tribal lands are remote. For example, the Havasupai Tribe's land is located at the bottom of the Grand Canyon.

Our rural populations face many challenges, including access to healthcare — but also access to affordable childcare, housing, and career and educational opportunities. Their incomes are lower, and they have higher rates of unemployment. These issues compound their healthcare challenges.

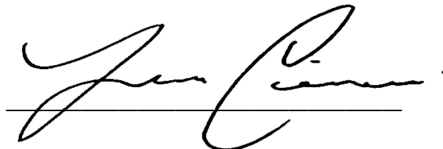
The healthcare needs of our rural communities are great, and it is critically important to us that Arizona gets its fair share of Rural Health Transformation Program dollars. An assessment conducted by the University of North Carolina resulted in a finding that Arizona ranked number 36 among the 50 states when ranked according to the criteria in the RHTP Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). This is not reflective of Arizona's landscape and reality.

The needs in our rural communities have never been greater. The State of Arizona has worked collaboratively with Arizona's rural hospitals, clinics, and behavioral health

providers to ensure that it has built a program that meets the needs of Arizona's rural communities, but it cannot do so if it does not receive the funds it requires.

Arizona is one of the most rural states in America. Thank you for your attention to this matter and for ensuring that Arizona receives at least \$200 million per year over five years. Given the vast area, significant needs of the State, and rurality of so many Arizonans, Arizona should receive much more than that in order to adequately address the significant needs of its rural communities.

Sincerely,



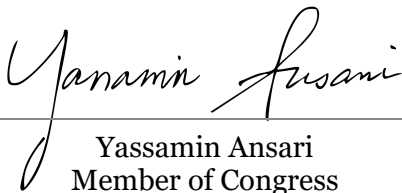
Juan Ciscomani
Member of Congress



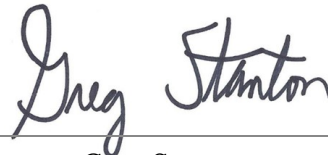
Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress

