



West Holt Memorial Hospital

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The Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson
United States Senate
720 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-2706

January 29, 2010

Dear Senator Nelson,

As the administrator of a Critical Access Hospital in rural North East Nebraska, I write to you to convey my support and that of our Board of Directors concerning Faith Regional Health Services' (FRHS) pursuit of federal appropriations for Fiscal Year 2010. FRHS and West Holt Memorial Hospital have had a valuable relationship for many years. Because of their willingness to be a regional healthcare leader, FRHS has championed many of the technologies that we use in our hospital daily. Most recently we have partnered with them on tele-health projects. Our patients benefit from bed side monitors that are continually scrutinized by the highly skilled monitoring technicians and Cardiac Physicians at FRHS. In addition, we use video conferencing almost daily. Education, clinical consults, administrative conferences, and emergency trauma consults are just a few of the many ways the Nebraska tele-health network and FRHS make big differences in our patients and staffs lives.

FRHS recently embarked upon a ten million dollar Electronic Health Record (EHR) project and as a possible beneficiary we are anxious to see its realization. FRHS's project would bring area clinicians immediate access to a shared database containing medical histories, test results, superior medical imaging technology, and clinical assessments as part of this initiative. As with past ventures, the quality care our patients receive stands to be drastically enhanced through this partnership. As you are aware, being a rural healthcare provider has significant challenges. Higher costs, shortages in all professional medical fields, and distances are only the start of a long list. If we can take advantage of FRHS's capital and technical assets we will be much better position to achieve the provision outlined in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act 2009.

The cost of EHR is staggering for a small hospital and as you know, congressional funds are available to help offset the costs of such programs. We are excited about the pursuit of these funds and about what these funds can do for healthcare in Northeastern Nebraska. We sincerely appreciate your support and are sure you will consider this a cause worthy of federal funds. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your efforts on our behalf.

Sincerely,

Michael Coyel
CEO