

**Flex Program Communication Toolkit**  
**Sample Op-Ed**  
**Critical Access Hospital**  
**Local Economic Impact**

<Sending institution's logo>

Contact Name:

Phone & e-mail:

Date

Editorial Opinion by XX, [hospital] board chairperson

**[Hospital] Contributes to Local Economic Vitality**

Rural communities throughout our nation are struggling to maintain jobs, education and health care. Young people move to urban centers to find employment. Our elders stay in their rural community and newly retired folks leave the fast-paced city for our serene country lifestyle.

What does this aging demographic mean for our local small, rural hospital? It means we are a vital resource for our community. It means we contribute to the health and well-being of our residents of all ages. And, it means we provide employment with an economic multiplier of nearly two times our payroll.

Most of us don't think about the health care system unless we're sick. And, when we are sick, we want the best care possible right here in our hometown. As the board chairperson for [hospital], I know firsthand the quality and integrity of our local health care system.

[Hospital] offers the finest in primary health care, with state-of-the-art diagnostic technology, first-rate physicians and a very dedicated, caring staff. We are in the process of completing our annual strategic planning process. In preparation for this plan, we commissioned a study of the economic impact of [hospital] in our community.

We learned that for every dollar we spend on payroll for our employees, \$1.93 is generated in this community. That's an economic multiplier worth bragging about. In addition, we learned that if we proceed with our planned renovation and expansion, we'll generate nearly five times our annual payroll in construction investment over the next three years.

As a community-owned hospital, we exist to serve this community's health care needs. As a bonus, we contribute millions of dollars annually to this region's economy. Good jobs, excellent health care and a bright future. No wonder so many people are retiring here!