

Date: January 8, 2014

From: Center for Healthcare Emergency Readiness (CHCER.ORG)

770-558-3704

www.chcer.org

**Re: Your Support Requested for CMS-3178-P to Make our
Hospitals and Nursing Homes Safe for Patients**



Dear Representative Brooks,

The CMS-3178-P proposing important rule changes in the nation's posture to protect all stakeholders in the Hospital to Hospice Continuum is finally here. The Public Health and Healthcare sector has been and is the "weakest link in the Homeland Security chain". Despite a plethora of guidance to the sector, they have consistently failed in their duty to protect the trusting public in time of known crises. Having received accreditation for CoP is no guarantee of safety and security (All Hazards) preparedness, as evidenced in Hurricane Sandy, Joplin, Irene, Katrina, Allison, etc.

Rather than boring you with reams of evidence-based facts and figures we would call your attention to the two books we provided your staff. The first book "UNREADY: To Err is Human-The Other Neglected Side of Hospital Safety and Security" July, 2010 and "DEADLY NEGLECT: Apathy and Denial vs. Act of God" August, 2011.

Our assumption is that the industry's wholesale failure before, during and after Hurricane Sandy provided DHHS with a sense of urgency to take action. The timing for the release of the proposed rule has us scratching our heads; it is not as if DHHS-CMS-ASPR has some idle time to take action on the proposal given challenges such as ACA, ICD-10 and Meaningful Use. It is our hope that Congress has seen the "writing on the wall" and has decided to act.

We have already witnessed a frenzy of activity in the Industry surfacing reasons to keep with the status-quo, and trust that your office is on the right side of this issue to keep the nation's healthcare populations, and your constituents, safe and secure in an increasing hostile world. We look forward to the comment period and your strong advocacy on this issue.

Sincerely,

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