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Contact: Danny Chun  
(630) 276-5558; [dchun@ihastaff.org](mailto:dchun@ihastaff.org)

### **Illinois Hospital Association Honors U.S. Senator Dick Durbin**

Springfield – U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) was honored for his commitment to small and rural hospitals on June 25 during the Illinois Hospital Association’s (IHA) Annual Meeting of Small & Rural Hospitals in Springfield. The Rural Legislator of the Year Awards recognize members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation, a State Senator and a State Representative. Loretta Durbin, wife of Sen. Durbin, received a plaque on behalf of Sen. Durbin, who was nominated by Frank Caruso, chief operating officer of Franklin Hospital, Benton.

During the awards presentation, Sen. Durbin was saluted for his long championing of Illinois’ small and rural hospitals, highlighted by his ongoing leadership in protecting Medicaid and Medicare and working toward a new Hospital Assessment program, as well as his support for funding for Critical Access Hospitals and information technology in rural regions of the state. “Senator Durbin works with us to expand the capacity of the health care system here in southern Illinois,” said Caruso. “He is responsive to the needs of southern Illinois hospitals and fights for our needs in Washington.”

“The Senator’s work in advocating for the extension of the moratorium on cuts to Medicaid and his leadership role in securing the Hospital Assessment Program for Illinois are absolutely critical for the continued viability of our hospitals,” said Ken Robbins, IHA President. “We are grateful for Senator Durbin’s exceptional and continuing support for our hospitals on the floor of the U.S. Senate.”

Other award winners were state Sen. Deanna Demuzio (D-49, Carlinville) and state Rep. Robert Pritchard (R-70, Sycamore). “Each of these award recipients has gone above and beyond the call of duty to support rural hospitals in Illinois,” said Randy Dauby, Chairman, Steering Committee, IHA Small & Rural Hospitals Constituency Section and CEO, Hamilton Memorial Hospital District, McLeansboro. “They work closely with rural health providers, listen to their needs and support important legislation that improves access to health care for all rural Illinois residents.”

The Illinois Hospital Association, with offices in Naperville and Springfield, represents and is an advocate for 200 Illinois hospitals and health systems and the patients and communities they serve. For more information, see IHA’s web site, [www.ihatoday.org](http://www.ihatoday.org).