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September 16, 2014

To: Mr. Clark Cossé, LHA Chief Governmental Officer

Re: Letter of Endorsement from the Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce  
Supporting Amendments 1 and 2

Dear Mr. Cossé:

Community hospital funding rates have been cut 26 percent since 2009 in order to balance the state budget. In addition, hospitals are being paid approximately 60 percent of what it actually costs to provide care for a Medicaid patient. These cuts and government underpayments have major implications for businesses, since individuals and businesses with health insurance have to pay more in higher healthcare insurance premiums to cover those costs. Layoffs and service reductions also negatively affect the economy, since hospitals are one of the largest employers in the state, with over 3,000 individuals being employed in the Houma-Thibodaux area.

Amendments 1 and 2 allow for a way to utilize available federal funds for healthcare services and are a step toward solving some of the more pressing healthcare problems that we are facing in our state.

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce is pleased to support the passage of Amendments 1 and 2. These amendments seek to protect healthcare services for seniors and children, along with jobs across our state; to improve access to quality care for everyone, including Louisiana's most vulnerable; and to provide additional, available federal funding for healthcare services — all without raising taxes or increasing healthcare costs to patients or businesses.

The passage of these amendments will help to ensure communities in Louisiana that their hospitals can continue to provide necessary care to meet everyone's needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Hingle II', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Donald A. Hingle II  
Chairman of the Board