

# Durbin Visits Alton Memorial Hospital, Talks Rural Health Workforce Roadmap

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ALTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today visited Alton Memorial Hospital, part of BJC Healthcare, to meet with its President, David Braasch, and health care providers. During their meeting, Durbin spoke about his new [Rural Health Workforce Roadmap](#), an initiative to help address the shortage of health care workers in rural Illinois and organize efforts among hospitals, health centers, graduate schools, and community colleges to tackle the root causes of these shortages. Durbin acknowledged BJC Healthcare’s efforts to implement some of the key tenants in Durbin’s Roadmap, including paying tuition to recruit new nurses, and serving as a training site for Southern Illinois University’s family medicine residency program.

Durbin, author of the [\*American Cures Act\*](#), also touched on his efforts to ensure that medical research remains a priority within the federal government's budget as Republican lawmakers threaten to slash the funding that Durbin has advocated for during his career.

“Our health care professionals have been through so much between the COVID-19 pandemic, stress and burnout, and Republican state lawmakers’ war on reproductive rights that also aim to target providers. The people who step up to care for their community’s health are invaluable to us and are providing a great public service” said Durbin. “But we must ensure that rural areas have access to the same quality of care and that those entering the health care field have the tools to thrive. I had a productive conversation with Alton Memorial Hospital President David Braasch today about how the federal government can support rural area hospitals, and I will continue to shape my Rural Health Workforce Roadmap around the needs of hospitals like Alton Memorial.”