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The AHA's Poison Pen Responds

Full-service community hospitals are decrying a letter sent to presidential candidates about the benefits of specialty hospitals, calling it "all fiction, no facts." The Iowa Hospital Association (IHA) and the American Hospital Association (AHA) have sent their own letter to the candidates about what they mistakenly believe is the real impact of limited-service facilities; they are still clinging to the belief that these specialty hospitals threaten the cornerstones of healthcare delivery.

The IHA-AHA letter is no surprise, given these associations' desire to make the Physician Hospitals of America (PHA) go away. All I can say is, good luck, because the PHA is gaining political ground and the hospital associations are feeling a little impotent right about now. The AHA is sticking to its usual tired list of complaints about specialty hospitals, including cherry-picking the most profitable cases, their alleged inability to handle surgical complications, concerns about self-referrals and physician ownership, etc. You know the list by heart.

Take comfort, members of PHA and the specialty hospital community – the more your opponents complain, the more dangerous you are, and they are running scared.