



November 13, 2007

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
709 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Association of
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Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.
President

Dear Senator Murkowski:

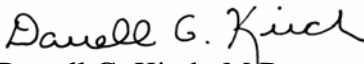
On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I am pleased to endorse your amendment to the "Health Centers Renewal Act of 2007." The AAMC is a nonprofit association representing all 126 accredited U.S. medical schools, nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, and 94 academic and scientific societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents 109,000 faculty members, 67,000 medical students, and 104,000 resident physicians.

An appropriate supply of well-educated and trained physicians is an essential element to assure access to quality health care services for all Americans. The AAMC projects that the United States will face a serious physician shortage in the next few decades. The nation's rapidly growing population, increasing numbers of elderly Americans, an aging physician workforce, and ongoing demand for health care services all point to this conclusion. Your amendment recognizes this need and helps to increase primary care graduate medical education at community health centers.

Community health centers serve an integral role in the nation's health care delivery system. Coupled with medical residency programs, they can help to ensure an adequate supply of well-trained physicians to care for the nation's neediest populations. Your amendment would bolster this important bridge between medical education and practice by providing grants to community health centers for the establishment or expansion of residency training programs at the centers. In return, these programs will help increase access to physicians for our nation's vulnerable and underserved.

To this end, your amendment authorizes necessary funding that will enhance the "Health Centers Renewal Act of 2007." Thank you again for your leadership on this issue, and we look forward to working with you to secure passage of this important amendment.

Sincerely,


Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.