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Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer

May 5, 2009

The Honorable Bill Nelson
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

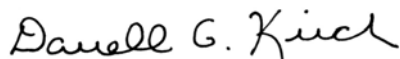
On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I write to express our strong support for the "Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2009." The AAMC is a not-for profit association representing all 130 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools, nearly 400 teaching hospitals and health systems, including 98 affiliated health systems and 68 Veterans Affairs medical centers; and 94 academic and professional societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents 109,000 faculty members, 75,000 medical students, and 106,000 resident physicians.

The AAMC strongly supports your efforts and leadership to expand residency positions through this legislation. The Medicare resident caps have been in place for more than 10 years and these caps have restricted the ability of teaching hospitals and medical schools to increase the nation's physician workforce and meet the needs of local communities. The United States is facing a serious shortage of physicians and other health professionals while the population continues to grow and age placing unprecedented demands on the health care system. Your legislation will enhance the nation's ability to meet future physician workforce needs.

We also strongly support your bill for alleviating burdensome Medicare regulations that complicate the ability of teaching hospitals to place residents in non-hospital settings for portions of their training. Such ambulatory (and often community-based) experience is critical to residents' preparation for medical practice, as it ensures they will be exposed to settings where they may ultimately practice.

Thank you again for your leadership and commitment in crafting and introducing the "Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2009." The AAMC pledges our continued support for your legislation, and looks forward to working with you and your colleagues to ensure enactment.

Sincerely,


Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.