



**Association of  
American Medical Colleges**  
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February 16, 2011

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

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I write to urge you to oppose “The Full Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011” (H.R. 1), which will destabilize funding for the nation’s medical research enterprise, as well as other health priorities, including programs to bolster the health care workforce in parts of the country where they are needed most. The AAMC represents all 133 accredited U.S. medical schools; approximately 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, including 62 Department of Veterans Affairs’ medical centers; and nearly 90 academic and scientific societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents 125,000 faculty members, 75,000 medical students, and 106,000 resident physicians.

H.R. 1 devastates funding for life-saving medical research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by forcing NIH to implement a \$1.6 billion cut midway through the fiscal year – a move that immediately will halt promising research on new screenings and treatments for disease while simultaneously eliminating jobs across the country. The bill threatens to dismantle decades of American leadership in medical innovation by delaying or discontinuing medical research projects, just as global competitors continue to invest aggressively in science to strengthen their economies. Moreover, the measure imposes an unprecedented, arbitrary cap on the cost of individual research projects, which may have the unintended consequence of disproportionately affecting senior investigators who have developed the greatest expertise in their fields.

Voting for H.R. 1 will mark an abrupt reversal of the nation’s longstanding, bipartisan commitment to better health through NIH-supported medical research at more than 3,000 medical schools, teaching hospitals, universities, and other research institutions in every state. Worse, it will issue a devastating blow to the millions of patients that every day rely on NIH for the possibility of a healthier tomorrow.

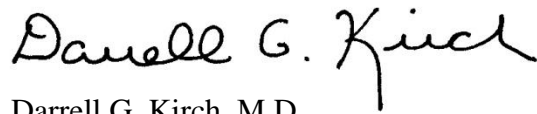
Similarly, the legislation substantially weakens health workforce programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) by imposing a drastic 30 percent cut on the Title VII and Title VIII health professions and nursing education programs, and eliminating the appropriation for the National Health Service Corps. These essential programs pick up where the private marketplace leaves off. They are the only federal programs that directly address the nation’s most pressing workforce concerns by increasing the supply of primary care practitioners, supporting interdisciplinary education and training in geriatrics to care for the country’s aging population, and facilitating recruitment, placement, and retention of health professionals in rural and underserved areas. At a time when millions of Americans already struggle to find physicians and other health providers in the face of existing and looming health

professions shortages, cuts to HRSA's health professions programs will exacerbate access issues, particularly among the most vulnerable communities.

In this challenging budget environment, we recognize the difficult decisions Congress faces as it seeks to improve the nation's fiscal stability. Such efforts, however, must be grounded in the goal of securing the prosperity and well-being of the American people. H.R. 1 undermines the nation's ability to meet this goal by jeopardizing programs that both improve health and strengthen the economy.

I strongly urge you to support the National Institutes of Health and other health programs as an urgent national priority by voting "no" on H.R. 1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darrell G. Kirch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'K'.

Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.  
President and CEO