

April XX, 2019

Dear Member of Congress:

The undersigned organizations, representing nearly XX associations and specialty societies, strongly encourage you to cosponsor the “The Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019” (S. 348, H.R. 1763). This bipartisan legislation would provide a responsible increase in Medicare support for graduate medical education (GME) to address the impending national physician workforce shortage. While we understand the many challenges Congress faces in the coming months, we stress the need to expand Medicare’s support for physician training to ensure all Americans have access to the care they deserve.

As you may know, the demand for physicians continues to grow faster than supply, leading to a projected shortfall of between 42,600 and 121,300 physicians by 2030 with predicted shortages in both primary and specialty care. Physicians are a critical element of our health care infrastructure and workforce, and if we do not address this impending problem, patients from pediatrics to geriatrics, will find it difficult to access the care they need. While this is a serious issue for all of us, it is especially problematic because of our aging population and physician retirement. A person’s need for a physician increases with age, and the U.S. population aged 65 and older is predicted to grow 50% by 2030.

America’s medical schools, teaching hospitals, and their physician partners are doing their part by investing in physician and health care provider training and leading innovations in new care delivery models that are more efficient and include better use of technologies — like telehealth — that improve patient access to care. Even with these efforts, however, shortages and access challenges will persist unless we expand the physician workforce.

Though shortfalls will affect all Americans, the most vulnerable populations, like those in rural and underserved areas, will be the first to feel the impact of the deficit of physicians. We are particularly concerned for our senior population whose Medicare eligibility and utilization of health care grows daily.

We look forward to working together to support the training of future physicians and to secure the passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine
Alliance of Specialty Medicine
AMDA - The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine
America’s Essential Hospitals
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Sleep Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Board of Medical Specialties
American College of Academic Addiction Medicine
American College of Cardiology
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American College of Radiology
American College of Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Urological Association
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Pathology Chairs
Children's Hospital Association
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Federation of American Hospitals
Greater New York Hospital Association
Medical Group Management Association
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Neurological Surgeons
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

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