



**Association of
American Medical Colleges**
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February 4, 2021

The Honorable Roy Blunt
United States Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Dingell
United States House of Representatives
116 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chris Murphy
United States Senate
136 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Latta
United States House of Representatives
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Blunt and Murphy and Representatives Dingell and Latta:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I am writing to offer our support and appreciation for reintroducing the Temporary Reciprocity to Ensure Access to Treatment Act (TREAT Act, S. 168, H.R. 708). This bill would help expand care for patients by creating a temporary uniform licensing standard for all practitioners and professionals that hold a valid license in good standing in any state to be permitted to practice in every state – including in-person and telehealth visits – during a public health emergency.

The AAMC is a not-for-profit association dedicated to transforming health through medical education, health care, medical research, and community collaborations. Its members are all 155 accredited U.S. medical schools; more than 400 teaching hospitals and health systems, including Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and more than 70 academic societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC leads and serves America's medical schools and teaching hospitals and their more than 179,000 full-time faculty members, 92,000 medical students, 140,000 resident physicians, and 60,000 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the biomedical sciences.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the health care delivery system in unprecedented ways. We are grateful that policymakers have recognized this and taken substantial steps to provide legislative and regulatory relief that expands access to care for patients, particularly related to telemedicine. It is critical that we build upon this expansion. In particular, the significant state variation with respect to licensing reciprocity and restrictions has continued to create a barrier to fully respond to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the use of telemedicine has been greatly expanded during the pandemic, the ability to provide access to care across state lines through telemedicine or by having providers temporarily re-locate to areas in need often is limited by state licensing laws. Licensure restrictions – traditionally an area of

regulation left to states – have resulted in reduced access to care for patients, particularly during this pandemic. Physicians are unable to treat patients across state lines unless they are licensed in the patient’s state or their state has a compact with the other state.

The AAMC supports the TREAT Act because it provides important flexibility during an emergency to ensure that patients receive the care they need. This would have many important benefits for patients, including providing access and continuity of care for mental health treatment, oncology patients, and others with serious or life-threatening conditions, and allowing health systems to draw on available licensed clinicians to meet the demands of a surge as outbreaks continue to arise. The TREAT Act also would facilitate providers’ ability to respond to the next national emergency or pandemic.

Thank you once again for your leadership in working to allow the needed flexibility for health care workers to provide critical care to patients across state lines during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Please feel free to contact me or Jason Kleinman (jkleinman@aamc.org), Sr. Legislative Analyst, Government Relations, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Fisher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Fisher, JD
AAMC Chief Public Policy Officer