



**Association of
American Medical Colleges**
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May 3, 2021

The Honorable Jim Costa
2081 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Costa,

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I write to thank you for introducing the *Expanding Medical Education Act* (H.R. 801), authorizing grants to enhance current and establish new regional medical campuses (RMCs). The AAMC is pleased to support this legislation.

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. and 17 accredited Canadian 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 AAMC projects a physician shortage of between 54,100 and 139,000 physicians by 2033.¹ This shortage is already seen in federally-designated health professions shortage areas (HPSAs), with over 122 million Americans currently living in these communities.² Because it takes between 7 to 10 years to educate and train a physician, we must focus on increasing our physician workforce now to help ensure that every individual has access to high-quality health care.

The *Expanding Medical Education Act* would assist in reducing these shortages by helping expose more future providers to rural and other underserved settings. RMCs are important settings for medical schools to expand their reach and help fulfill their unique missions. Approximately 30% of medical schools already have at least one branch campus.³ RMCs often have targeted missions, such as training future providers in primary care and in rural settings. The funds authorized in your bill would help with the construction of new branch campuses and

¹ Dall, T., PhD, Reynolds, R., PhD, Chakrabarti, R., Undefined, Jones, K., Undefined, & Iacobucci, W., Undefined. (2020, June). The Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand: Projections From 2018 to 2033 (Rep.)

² Shortage Areas. (2021). Retrieved 3 May 2021, from <https://data.hrsa.gov/topics/health-workforce/shortage-areas>

³ Association of American Medical Colleges. Regional Campuses at US Medical Schools. Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) Annual Questionnaire Part II, <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/curriculum-reports/interactive-data/regional-campuses-us-medical-schools>.

assist current RMCs in enhancing their facilities, expanding their enrollment, recruiting new faculty, developing curriculum, and planning for accreditation.

Additionally, we appreciate the legislation's priority for institutions that are recruiting students and faculty from underrepresented backgrounds, and for RMCs located in health professions shortage areas. Having a diverse faculty is crucial in mentoring future physicians from underrepresented backgrounds and leads to increased culturally competent care from providers. Studies also show that underrepresented students are more likely to serve patients from those backgrounds.⁴

Thank you again for your ongoing efforts to enhance and grow RMCs. We look forward to continuing to work with you as the legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,

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

Karen Fisher, JD
AAMC Chief Public Policy Officer

⁴ Stewart, K., Brown, S. L., Wrensford, G., & Hurley, M. M. (2020). Creating a Comprehensive Approach to Exposing Underrepresented Pre-health Professions Students to Clinical Medicine and Health Research. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 112(1), 36-43. doi:10.1016/j.jnma.2019.12.003