



Association of
American Medical Colleges
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December 9, 2024

The Honorable Jill Tokuda
1005 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Carol Miller
465 Cannon House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Tokuda and Miller:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I write in support of the Strengthening Pathways to Health Professions Act (H.R. 10280), which would extend tax-exempt status to certain Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) health workforce education scholarship and loan programs, to improve the effectiveness of federal programs that grow and strengthen the pipeline of health care professionals.

The AAMC is a nonprofit association dedicated to improving the health of people everywhere through medical education, health care, medical research, and community collaborations. Its members are all 159 U.S. medical schools accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education; 13 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 500 academic health systems and teaching hospitals, 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, academic health systems and teaching hospitals, and the millions of individuals across academic medicine, including more than 201,000 full-time faculty members, 97,000 medical students, 158,000 resident physicians, and 60,000 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the biomedical sciences. Following a 2022 merger, the Alliance of Academic Health Centers International broadened participation in the AAMC by 70 international academic health centers throughout five regional offices across the globe.

Health workforce shortages have highlighted the pervasive health inequities facing rural, urban, and other underserved communities, and widening gaps in care for the most vulnerable patients. The HRSA Title VII Health Professions and Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs play a crucial role in shaping, educating, and strengthening the health workforce at all stages. These programs help cultivate and retain a strong health workforce from rural and underrepresented communities; bolster training opportunities in primary care, mental and behavioral health, oral health, and pediatric and geriatric care; and support a robust and diverse nursing workforce.

Currently, federal income taxes effectively reduce the financial benefit of health professions scholarship and loan repayment awards, as HRSA needs to use appropriated funds for the employer share of taxes and participants need to cover their share of taxes with funds that could be used to satisfy educational debt and expenses.

The Strengthening Pathways to Health Professions Act would extend the tax-exempt status provided to the National Health Service Corp (NHSC) program to similar HRSA health workforce programs by amending Section 108(f)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code to exclude certain health professions education scholarship and loan payments from gross income. As a result, this change would allow HRSA to make higher and additional awards through several of these important Title VII and VIII programs, including the Faculty Loan Repayment, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment, and the Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Loan Repayment, and Nurse Corps Scholarship and Loan Repayment programs.

Further, extending tax-exempt status to these programs would allow awarded students, residents, faculty, and providers to receive the full amount of their financial awards to pay tuition, fees, and other educational costs. Research shows that Title VII and Title VIII programs increase the number of underrepresented students enrolled in health professions schools, heighten awareness of factors contributing to health disparities, and attract health professionals to serve in underserved areas.¹ The Strengthening Pathways to Health Professions Act would aid in the growth and expansion of the health workforce.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to enhance, grow, and support the health workforce. The AAMC looks forward to working with you to enact the Strengthening Pathways to Health Professions Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle P. Turnipseed". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danielle Turnipseed, JD, MHSA, MPP
AAMC Chief Public Policy Officer

CC: David J. Skorton, MD, President and CEO

¹Stewart KA, Brown SL, Wrensford G, Hurley MM. Creating a comprehensive approach to exposing underrepresented pre-health professions students to clinical medicine and health research. *J Natl Med Assoc.* 2020;112(1):36-43. doi:10.1016/j.jnma.2019.12.003