



March 19, 2026

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
728 Hart Senate Office Building  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Murkowski and Reed:

On behalf of the AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges),<sup>1</sup> I write to thank you for introducing the Educating Medical Professionals and Optimizing Workforce Efficiency and Readiness (EMPOWER) for Health Act (S. 4110), which would reauthorize health professions programs under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act that are administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) through fiscal year (FY) 2030. The AAMC is pleased to offer our support for this legislation.

The AAMC projects that the United States will face a shortage of up to 86,000 primary care and specialty physicians by 2036.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, HRSA estimates that 98 million Americans currently live in federally designated primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), 68 million live in dental health HPSAs, and 147 million live in mental health HPSAs.<sup>3</sup> At least 16,600 primary care practitioners, 11,400 dental health practitioners, and 7,300 mental health practitioners are needed to address these existing shortages and ensure access to care for these communities.<sup>4</sup>

The HRSA Title VII health professions programs are foundational to address these shortages, producing real, measurable results and positive community impact. They successfully recruit, educate, and train many different health professionals – including physicians, physician assistants, geriatricians, mental and behavioral health providers, public health practitioners, social workers, and other frontline health care workers. Studies also show that the Title VII programs increase the number of students from all backgrounds who are enrolled in health professions schools; heighten awareness of the factors

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<sup>1</sup> The AAMC is a nonprofit association dedicated to improving the health of people everywhere through medical education, clinical care, biomedical research, and community collaborations. Its members are all 162 U.S. medical schools accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education; 13 Canadian medical schools accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of 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 210,000 full-time faculty members, 99,000 medical students, 162,000 resident physicians, and 60,000 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the biomedical sciences. Through the Alliance of Academic Health Centers International, AAMC membership reaches more than 60 international academic health centers throughout five regional offices across the globe. Learn more at [aamc.org](http://aamc.org).

<sup>2</sup> GlobalData Plc. *The Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand: Projections From 2021 to 2036*. Washington, DC: AAMC; 2024.

<sup>3</sup> [HRSA Health Workforce Shortage Areas](#)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

contributing to differential health outcomes; and attract health professionals more likely to serve in underserved areas.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, it is important to note that the Title VII programs are essential in educating current and future providers to work across the country, advancing new health care delivery systems, and enhancing interprofessional and integrated models of care. For example, the Title VII health careers pipeline programs – such as the Health Careers Opportunity Program, Centers of Excellence, and Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students – contribute to better patient outcomes by strengthening the pathways into health careers and expanding the health workforce, including in underserved and rural areas.

Additionally, several Title VII programs – such as the Area Health Education Centers, Geriatrics programs, and the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Programs – assess the needs of the local communities in which they serve and bring together knowledge and skills across disciplines to provide effective, efficient, coordinated, and comprehensive care. Title VII programs also support and strengthen the medical, public health, mental health, and oral health workforces. Each Title VII program plays a unique role to help grow and support the next generation of providers and ensure that the health workforce is prepared to meet the needs of all patients.

The EMPOWER for Health Act would reaffirm the federal government’s commitment to building the next generation of health care professionals and improving patients’ access to care.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to grow and support the physician and health workforce, and toward our mutual goal of improved health for all. The AAMC looks forward to working with you to enact the EMPOWER for Health 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 Skorton, MD  
AAMC President and CEO

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<sup>5</sup> Stewart 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