

March 24, 2021

The Honorable Bob Menendez
U.S. Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
U.S. Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Menendez, Senator Boozman, and Majority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Advocacy Coalition, the undersigned organizations offer our enthusiastic support for the Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act (S. 834). This bipartisan legislation is crucial to expanding the physician workforce and to ensuring that patients across the country are able to access quality care from providers.

The need for physicians continues to grow faster than supply, leading to an estimated shortfall of between 54,100 and 139,000 primary care and specialty physicians by 2033. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the significant barriers to care that patients face, and has also highlighted rising concerns of clinician burnout. This is particularly alarming given that more than two of five currently active physicians will be 65 or older within the next decade, raising concerns about the impact of physician retirement. Additionally, the U.S. population is continuing to both grow and age, and access issues persist in rural and underserved areas. The physician workforce is a critical element of our nation's health care infrastructure, and if we do not address this impending problem, patients from pediatrics to geriatrics and nearly everyone in-between, will find it even more difficult to access the care they need.

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.

We are grateful that bipartisan congressional leaders worked together to provide 1,000 new Medicare-supported GME positions in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 – the first increase of its kind in nearly 25 years. The Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2021 would build on this historic investment by gradually raising the number of Medicare-supported GME positions by 2,000 per year for seven years, for a total of 14,000 new slots. A share of these positions would be targeted to hospitals with diverse needs including hospitals in rural areas, hospitals serving patients from health professional shortage areas (HPSAs), hospitals in

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states with new medical schools or branch campuses, and hospitals already training over their caps.

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

Sincerely,

Association of American Medical Colleges

Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health

Academy for Professionalism in Health Care

Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM)

Alliance of Specialty Medicine

America's Essential Hospitals

American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine

American Academy of Neurology

American Academy of Ophthalmology

American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

American Association of Chairs of Departments of Psychiatry

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training

American Association of Neurological Surgeons

American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons

American College of Academic Addiction Medicine (ACAAM)

American College of Mohs Surgery

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Physicians

American College of Radiology

American College of Rheumatology

American College of Surgeons

American Gastroenterological Association

American Geriatrics Society

American Headache Society

American Medical Association

American Medical Student Association

American Osteopathic Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Society for Clinical Pathology

American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM)

American Society of Addiction Medicine

American Society of Anesthesiologists

American Society of Echocardiography

American Society of Hematology

American Society of Plastic Surgeons

American Urological Association
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
Association of Academic Physiatrists
Association of Minority Health Professions
Association of Pathology Chairs
Association of Professors of Dermatology
Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics
Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO)
Catholic Health Association of the United States
Children's Hospital Association
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
College of American Pathologists
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Federation of American Hospitals
Greater New York Hospital Association
Healthcare Association of New York State
Heart Failure Society of America
Illinois Health and Hospital Association
Medical Group Management Association
National Association of Spine Specialists
Premier Healthcare Alliance
Society for Academic Emergency Medicine
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of Academic Associations of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine
Society of Directors of Research in Medical Education
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of University Surgeons
Student National Medical Association (SNMA)
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
Vizient, Inc.