



Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA, Executive Vice President, CEO

May 4, 2009

The Honorable Ben Nelson
United States Senate
720 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am pleased to offer our support for S. 860, the "Health Professionals State Loan Repayment Tax Relief Act of 2009," which exempts certain state funded loan repayment programs from federal income taxation.

Several studies confirm that the United States faces a physician shortage. The Council on Graduate Medical Education (COGME) predicts a shortage of 85,000 physicians by the year 2020. In order to address physician shortages, programs like the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) and equivalent state funded loan repayment programs are vital in recruiting and retaining health professionals where they are needed the most. These loan repayment programs improve access to health care for underserved areas, provide incentives for physicians and other health care professionals to enter undersupplied specialties, reduce the financial burden that the cost of medical school places on new physicians, and help to ensure that health care professionals represent the diverse makeup of the general population. Your proposal provides critical tax relief to physicians who dedicate their services in medically underserved areas.

We believe that the "Health Professionals State Loan Repayment Tax Relief Act" plays an important role in addressing the projected physician shortage and ensuring access to care.

We appreciate your leadership on this important issue and look forward to working with you to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

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

Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA