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EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CEO

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May 11, 2020

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney  
United States House of Representatives  
2308 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 6720 - The Student Loan Forgiveness for Frontline Health Workers Act

Dear Representative Maloney:

On behalf of our physician and medical student members, the American Medical Association (AMA) is writing to voice our strong support for H.R. 6720, the “Student Loan Forgiveness for Frontline Health Workers Act,” and to urge the House of Representatives and the Senate to quickly pass this legislation. Physicians, residents, and medical students are playing a critical role in responding to the COVID-19 crisis and putting their health on the line caring for the sickest patients, many without appropriate personal protective equipment. As such, due to their selfless actions in the face of a national emergency, physicians, residents, and medical students who perform work to combat COVID-19 should be provided with meaningful relief in the form of student loan forgiveness.

Student loans remain a major burden for medical students, with 76 percent of students graduating with a median debt of \$200,000. The AMA has long-standing concerns about the high and growing costs of medical education, which remains the most expensive post-secondary educational program in the United States. In the weeks, months, and years that follow this pandemic, as our medical community works tirelessly to help our nation heal, those physicians who risked their lives during this time should be able to focus on providing the best medical care possible, rather than worrying about the burden of the student loans that helped provide their ability to care for our nation.

Moreover, providing student loan forgiveness for medical professionals during this time will have positive long-term effects. Currently, debt incurred by pursuing medical training serves as a barrier to addressing access challenges. Without the burden of student loans, more health care professionals will likely be willing to work in rural or underserved areas and provide much needed medical care in the coming years.

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney

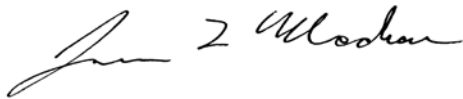
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As physicians, residents, and medical students are redeployed from their primary training programs, graduate early to join the frontlines, research vigilantly for a cure, and care for ailing patients, the last worry they should have is paying off their student loans. As such, the AMA urges the House of Representatives and Senate to pass H.R. 6720, the "Student Loan Forgiveness for Frontline Health Workers Act," thereby providing a measure of relief for our physicians that are leading the fight in the battle against COVID-19.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James L. Madara".

James L. Madara, MD