

July 9, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-226, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-255, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senate Majority Leader McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and House Minority Leader McCarthy:

The COVID-19 pandemic has stressed our nation's health care system in myriad unprecedented ways. Across the country, physicians and providers have mobilized on the front lines of this crisis to deliver care to their patients, at times in the most challenging conditions. COVID-19 is just the latest example that the U.S., which has fewer physicians per capita than other comparable countries, is in dire need of more doctors, not only to treat a growing and aging population, but also to respond to public health emergencies like COVID-19.

To date, Congress has passed four supplemental spending bills that have provided desperately needed relief to providers and patients across the nation. **As Congress continues to address the COVID-19 public health emergency by allocating additional resources and making necessary policy changes, the undersigned organizations representing over 60 health care associations and specialty societies urge you to take action now to better prepare the nation for its next health care crisis by including the *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019* (S. 348/H.R. 1763) in the next comprehensive COVID-19 supplemental.** This bipartisan legislation would provide a gradual and responsible increase in Medicare support for physician residency training through graduate medical education (GME) to address the impending national physician workforce shortage.

The demand for physicians continues to grow faster than supply, leading to a projected shortfall of 54,100 and 139,000 physicians by 2033. Physicians are a critical element of our health care infrastructure and workforce, and if we do not address this impending problem, patients from pediatrics to geriatrics will find it difficult to access the care they need. While this is a serious issue for all of us, it is especially problematic because of our aging population and physician retirement. Though shortfalls will affect all Americans, the most vulnerable populations, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, will be the first to feel the impact of the deficit

of physicians. We are particularly concerned for our senior population because as the numbers of new Medicare enrollees grows so does their need for and utilization of health care services.

As you consider additional supplemental legislation to address the COVID-19 emergency, we urge you to include the Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019 to ensure patients have access to care, build a robust physician workforce, and prepare for the next public health emergency – whether that is a pandemic, a natural disaster, or other public health challenge. We look forward to working together to support the training of future physicians and to secure the passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health
Academy for Professionalism in Health Care
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine
Alliance of Specialty Medicine
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 Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Academy of Sleep Medicine
American Association for Anatomy
American Association of Chairs of Department 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 Board of Medical Specialties
American College of Academic Addiction Medicine
American College of Cardiology
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Physicians
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Neurological Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society of Addiction Medicine

American Society of Breast Surgeons
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Urological Association
America's Essential Hospitals
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
Association of Academic Physiatrists
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Medical and Graduate Departments of Biochemistry
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of University Professors of Neurology
Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology
Association of University Radiologists
Children's Hospital Association
College of American Pathologists
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Federation of American Hospitals
Greater New York Hospital Association
Healthcare Association of New York State
Healthcare Leadership Council
Heart Rhythm Society
Illinois Health and Hospital Association
Medical Group Management Association
National Association of Spine Specialists
Premier Healthcare Alliance
Society for Academic Emergency Medicine
Society of Academic Associations of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine
Society of General Internal Medicine
Student National Medical Association
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
Vizient, Inc.