



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

March 25, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), which represents the nation's osteopathic medical schools, we thank you for your strong bipartisan leadership on the *Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015* (H.R. 2) and support its prompt approval.

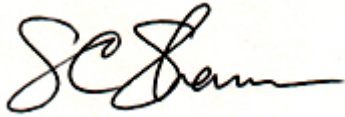
Furthermore, we support the bill's language, which includes an extension for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program, the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), and the Community Health Centers. As you know, without congressional action, funding for these programs will expire at the end of fiscal year (FY) 2015.

These federal programs provide quality primary health care services to medically-underserved communities and vulnerable populations. The THCGME Program aims to increase the number of primary care physicians that serve the communities most in need. THCs currently train more than 550 medical and dental residents and are providing more than 700,000 primary care visits in underserved rural and urban communities. The THCGME Program provides long-term benefits and is critical to ensure the stability and continuity of the nation's medical residency training programs. The NHSC supports physicians and other health professionals who practice in health professional shortage areas across the U.S. In FY14, the NHSC had a total of 9,242 primary care clinicians providing health care services. The NHSC projects that a field strength of 15,000 primary care clinicians will be in health professional shortage areas in FY16.

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AACOM strongly supports the extension of these critical programs in the *Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015*, and we look forward to working with you to advance this vital legislation, which is essential to our nation's health care system.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SC Shannon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Stephen C. Shannon, DO, MPH
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Fred Upton, Chairman, House Energy & Commerce Committee
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, House Energy & Commerce Committee
The Honorable Paul Ryan, Chairman, House Ways & Means Committee
The Honorable Sander Levin, Ranking Member, House Ways & Means Committee