



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 8, 2015

The Honorable Bill Nelson
U.S. Senate
716 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Nelson, Minority Leader Reid, and Senator Schumer:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for S. 1148, the *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in reintroducing this vital legislation, which seeks to address the nation's physician workforce shortage and expand Medicare-funded graduate medical education (GME) residency positions in programs across the country.

AACOM represents the 31 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 44 teaching locations in 29 states. In the 2014-2015 academic year, these colleges educated over 24,600 future physicians – more than 25 percent of new U.S. medical students.

AACOM lauds your efforts in working to address this serious crisis in our nation's health care system. As educators for future osteopathic physicians, we strongly support policies, including S. 1148, which work to provide a cost-effective solution to the physician workforce shortage. This legislation is timely and momentous, as it would give priority to hospitals in states with new medical schools, emphasize training in community-based settings, and require the National Healthcare Workforce Commission to submit a report to identify shortage specialty residency programs.

The *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015* is critical to ensure that additional GME residency slots are made available to new medical school graduates to pursue their post-graduate training to become licensed practicing physicians. Moreover, in response to the current and increasing physician workforce shortage, the number of osteopathic medical school graduates is growing and is expected to continue to rise. This legislation will result in expanded access to patient care and is of high importance to many rural and underserved areas, which already face shortages of primary care providers.

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On behalf of AACOM, I offer our strong support for the *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015*, and I thank you for your steadfast leadership and dedication on working to support a health care system that will enable current osteopathic medical students and future osteopathic physicians to provide high quality care to the patients they serve.

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, D.O., M.P.H.
President and CEO