



Policy & Advocacy

AACOM Government Relations

ENCOURAGE CONGRESS TO PASS THE FAIR ACT, H.R. 8850

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) invites you to use the resources provided in this toolkit to join us in supporting the *Fair Access in Residency (FAIR) Act*, H.R. 8850. This bipartisan legislation would ensure fairness for DOs applying to federally funded residency programs.

[Advocate via our Action Center](#) and raise your voice on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to connect with Congress about the *FAIR Act*. Organizations and individuals are encouraged to use and customize the sample template and posts below to advocate for this priority legislation and to encourage your network to take action.

EMAIL / WEB POST TEMPLATE

Urge your network to advocate for the *FAIR Act*! Whether you are affiliated with a college of osteopathic medicine, national or state association or other organization joining AACOM in support of the *FAIR Act*, you can use the below template to email your membership encouraging their advocacy around the bill, or publish a web posting to help spread the word about this vital legislation:

ORGANIZATION NAME strongly supports the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM)'s national initiative to ensure fairness for DOs applying to federally funded residency programs.

Championed by Representatives Diana Harshbarger (R-TN), Chellie Pingree (D-ME) and Sam Graves (R-MO), the [Fair Access in Residency \(FAIR\) Act, H.R. 8850](#), ensures that Medicare-funded residency programs accept DO applications and their licensing exam, the COMLEX-USA.

While *FAIR Act* introduction is a significant first step, more needs to be done to achieve enactment. Join AACOM and the osteopathic community to urge your Members of Congress to support the *FAIR Act* and ensure federally funded graduate medical

education (GME) programs equitably accept and assess DO and MD residency candidates.

[TAKE ACTION NOW!](#)

WHY THE *FAIR ACT* IS NEEDED

According to the 2022 National Resident Matching Program survey, **32 percent** of residency program directors report never or seldom interviewing DO candidates, and for those who do, **56 percent** require the USMLE, the MD licensing exam. As a result, the proportion of DO students taking the USMLE as well as the COMLEX-USA has increased by **26 percent** since 2015.

AACOM continues to swiftly build organizational endorsements for the *FAIR Act*. View the [national and state organizations supporting](#) this important legislation.

WHAT THE *FAIR ACT* DOES

The *FAIR Act* requires Medicare-funded GME programs to do the following as a condition for participation:

1. Report annually the number of applicants for residency from osteopathic and allopathic medical schools and how many such applicants were accepted from each respective type of school, and;
2. Affirm annually that they accept applicants from osteopathic and allopathic medical schools, and that if an examination score is required for acceptance, the COMLEX-USA and USMLE will be equally accepted.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact aacomgr@aacom.org if you have questions and want to be actively involved in advancing this key priority.



FAIR ACCESS IN RESIDENCY (*FAIR*) ACT: SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

To help ensure federally funded GME programs equitably assess and accept DO and MD residency candidates, we are calling on all [#AACOMAdvocates](#) to make a difference. Raise your voice on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to connect with Congress about the *Fair Access in*

Residency (FAIR) Act, H.R.8850. Use these sample posts below or draft your own to advocate for this priority legislation and to encourage your network to take action.

Not sure who your Representative or Senators are? Use our “Find Officials” tool in AACOM’s [Action Center](#).

WANT YOUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE?

Follow these tips:

Share your story. Personalize your post to tell your Members of Congress why the issue is important to you (e.g., “As a DO,” “As an osteopathic medical student,” and include the state/district hashtag like #CA-17).

Get your lawmakers’ attention. Identify yourself as a constituent to remind them why this issue is critical to your state/district—and why they should pay attention. Bonus: include one of our pre-made graphics and #AACOMAdvocates.

Declare your ask. Now that you’ve explained the issue, don’t forget to clearly state what you want (e.g., for Congress to support the *FAIR Act*, for your Representative to pass H.R. 8850 or for your Senators to introduce a companion bill).

SHARE THIS

Guarantee Graduate Medical Education Parity for DOs

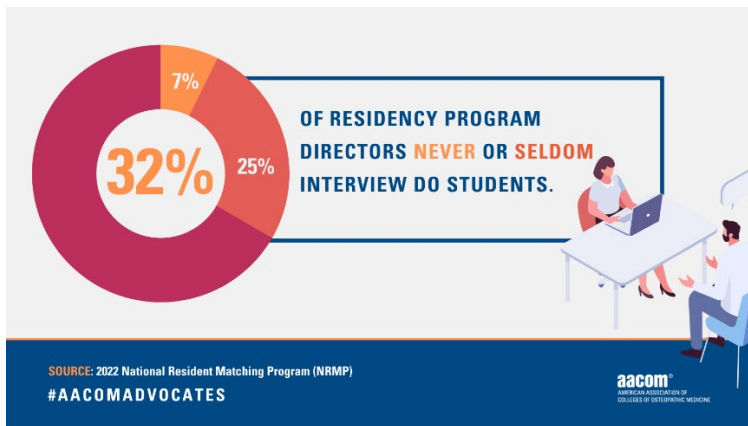
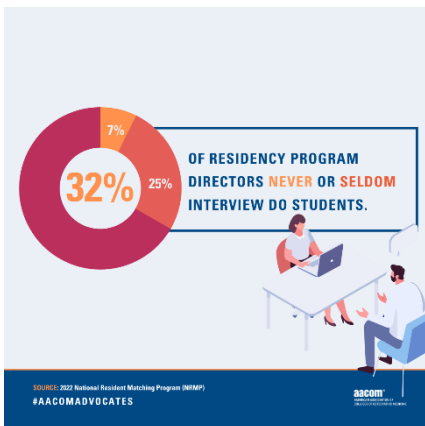
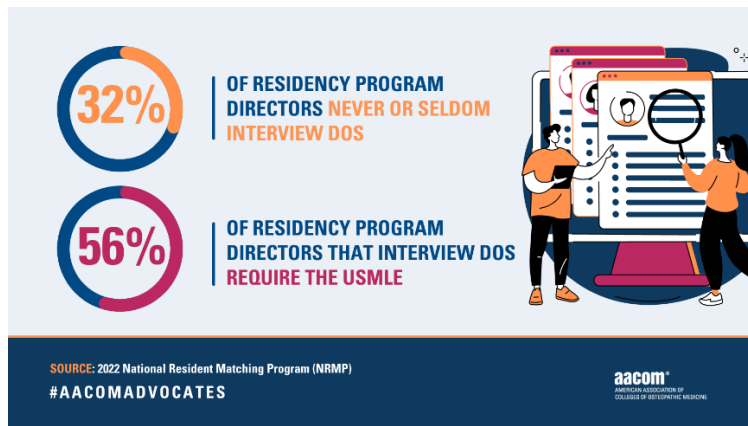
- DOs and MDs follow parallel paths to residency. Yet 32% of residency program directors never or seldom interview DO candidates. [@MemberofCongress](#), pass the FAIR Act (H.R. 8850) to ensure all residency programs are open to DOs. #AACOMAdvocates <https://bit.ly/3CVX15D>
- 32% of residency program directors never or seldom interview DOs. Of those who do, 56% require the USMLE for DO applicants. [@MemberofCongress](#), pass the FAIR Act (H.R. 8850) to ensure GME programs equitably assess and accept DO candidates. #AACOMAdvocates <https://bit.ly/3CVX15D>
- DO students spend more than \$6 million a year on the USMLE, even though it’s not required for licensure. [@MemberofCongress](#), help DOs have a FAIR shot at residency by passing the FAIR Act (H.R. 8850). #AACOMAdvocates <https://bit.ly/3CVX15D>
- [.@MemberofCongress](#), please pass the FAIR Act (H.R. 8850) to ensure Medicare-funded GME, which comprises 71% of all GME, does not exclude or place undue burdens on

DOs. #AACOMAdvocates <https://bit.ly/3CVX15D>

- 48 and counting organizations and 1,000s of #AACOMAdvocates join @AACOMmunities in supporting the FAIR Act (H.R. 8850). **@MemberofCongress**, will you ensure federally funded residency programs equitably accept and assess DO and MD residency candidates? <https://bit.ly/3eHraMA>


Take Action on GME Parity

DOWNLOAD GRAPHICS



Since single accreditation, the proportion of DOs taking the USMLE as well as the COMLEX has increased by

26%
(from 52% in 2015 to 66% in 2021)




SOURCE: NBOME and USMLE data
#AACOMADVOCATES

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