

January 18, 2022

The Honorable Tom O'Halleran
U.S. House of Representatives
318 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David McKinley
U.S. House of Representatives
2239 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Kind
U.S. House of Representatives
1502 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brad Wenstrup
U.S. House of Representatives
2419 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives O'Halleran, McKinley, Kind and Wenstrup,

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for H.R. 4970, the *Rural Medical Residency Expansion Act*. As educators of future physicians, we support policies that provide solutions to the physician workforce shortage in rural areas.

AACOM leads and advocates for the full continuum of osteopathic medical education (OME) to improve the health of the public. Founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, AACOM represents all 38 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine—educating nearly 34,000 future physicians, 25 percent of all U.S. medical students—at 59 teaching locations in 34 U.S. states, as well as osteopathic graduate medical education professionals and trainees at U.S. medical centers, hospitals, clinics and health systems.

The OME community strongly supports this bipartisan legislation to develop or expand medical residency training programs at rural medical facilities. Colleges of osteopathic medicine consistently achieve top rankings in primary care and rural and underserved practice categories. In fact, recent AACOM data show that 40 percent of graduating 2019-2020 osteopathic medical students plan to practice in a medically underserved or health shortage area; of those, 45 percent plan to practice in a rural community. Moreover, 58 percent of osteopathic medical schools are located in health professional shortage areas.

Thank you for your commitment to the future physician workforce. AACOM looks forward to working with you to advance H.R. 4970. For questions or additional information, please contact me at dbergman@aacom.org.

Sincerely,



David Bergman, JD
Vice President of Government Relations