

June 25, 2021

The Honorable Dick Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Marco Rubio
United States Senate
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Rubio,

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for the *Strengthening America's Health Care Readiness Act* (S. 54). As educators of future physicians, we support policies that aim to address healthcare workforce shortages, especially in underserved 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 37 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine—educating nearly 31,000 future physicians, 25 percent of all U.S. medical students—at 58 teaching locations in 33 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 expand the National Health Services Corps' scholarship and loan repayment programs, which incentivize practice in healthcare shortage areas. Colleges of osteopathic medicine consistently achieve top rankings in primary care and underserved practice categories. Additionally, 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. This includes 44 percent of Hispanic/Latino osteopathic graduates and 80 percent of Black osteopathic graduates.

Thank you for your commitment to the future physician workforce. AACOM looks forward to working with you to advance S. 54. For questions or additional information, please contact me at dbergman@aacom.org

Sincerely,



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