



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

March 31, 2016

The Honorable Kathy Castor  
U.S. House of Representatives  
205 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Castor:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for H.R. 4774, the *Training Tomorrow's Doctors Today Act*. Thank you for your leadership in introducing this vital legislation, which seeks to address the nation's physician workforce shortage by expanding Medicare-funded graduate medical education (GME) training positions in programs across the country.

AACOM represents the administrations, faculty, and students of the nation's osteopathic medical colleges, which offer the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degree. There are 31 colleges of osteopathic medicine offering instruction at 46 locations in 31 states. In the 2015 – 2016 academic year, these colleges are educating over 26,100 future physicians – more than 20 percent of U.S. medical students.

As educators of future osteopathic physicians, AACOM strongly supports policies, including the *Training Tomorrow's Doctors Today Act*, which provide a comprehensive and cost-effective solution to address the physician workforce shortage. This legislation is timely, as it would require hospitals to train at least 30 percent of their residents in primary care and general surgery, strengthening a core component of the physician workforce, and give priority to hospitals in states with new medical schools. In addition, the bill would emphasize training in community-based settings and expand access to patient care, particularly in many rural and underserved areas, which already face shortages of primary care providers.

As GME funding continues to be threatened, the *Training Tomorrow's Doctors Today Act* is critical to ensure additional GME residency slots are available for medical school graduates to pursue their post-graduate training and become licensed practicing physicians. This legislation is more opportune than ever, as the current physician workforce shortage continues to grow and the number of osteopathic medical school graduates is increasing and is expected to further rise. Moreover, the introduction of transparency and accountability measures into GME funding through the linkage of GME payments to patient care priorities and a physician workforce study will help ensure taxpayer dollars are being spent responsibly.

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On behalf of AACOM, I offer our ardent support for the *Training Tomorrow's Doctors Today Act*, and I thank you for your unwavering leadership in working to support a health care system that will enable future physicians to provide high-quality care to the patients they will 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, DO, MPH  
President and CEO