



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 3, 2017

The Honorable Susan Collins  
U.S. Senate  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester  
U.S. Senate  
311 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Collins and Tester:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for the *Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2017*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in introducing this vital bipartisan legislation, which produces primary care physicians to provide health care in underserved communities across the country by reauthorizing the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program.

AACOM represents the 33 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 48 teaching locations in 31 states. In the 2016-2017 academic year, these colleges educated over 27,000 future physicians—more than 20 percent of all U.S. medical students.

As educators of future physicians, AACOM strongly supports policies, including the *Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2017*, that work to provide cost-effective and innovative solutions to the physician workforce shortage. This legislation is timely and momentous, as it would reauthorize the THCGME Program otherwise set to expire on September 30, 2017, and would provide a source of sustainable funding to ensure this highly successful program's place in training our future primary care physician workforce.

This critical program encourages greater connections and services between traditionally underserved communities and the emerging physician workforce by creating opportunities for medical students to carry out their required training in regions of the country where their services are most needed. This program is highly effective in transitioning students into areas of need, with over 80 percent remaining in primary care practice and over half remaining in underserved communities following completion of their training.

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On behalf of AACOM, I offer our strong support for the *Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2017*, and I thank you for your steadfast leadership and dedication to supporting a health care system that will enable current osteopathic medical students and future physicians to provide high quality primary health 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, DO, MPH  
President and CEO