



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

February 8, 2019

The Honorable Robert Menendez  
United States Senate  
528 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman  
United States Senate  
141 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Menendez, Senator Boozman, and Minority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer support for the *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019*. Thank you for your leadership in reintroducing this legislation, which seeks to address the nation's physician workforce shortage and expand Medicare-funded graduate medical education (GME) residency positions in programs across the country.

AACOM represents the 35 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 55 teaching locations in 32 states. In the current academic year, these colleges are educating more than 30,000 future physicians – 25 percent of U.S. medical students. AACOM was founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, and to serve as a unifying voice for osteopathic medical education. The association leads and advocates for the osteopathic medical education community to improve the health of the public.

As educators of future physicians, we support policies, including the *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019*, which aim to provide a solution to the physician workforce shortage. This legislation is timely, as it would give priority to hospitals in states with new medical schools and emphasize training in community-based settings. The bill's additional GAO requirement to conduct a study on strategies for increasing health professional workforce diversity is critical to encourage greater connections and services between traditionally-underserved communities and the emerging physician workforce.

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The *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019* would ensure that additional GME residency slots are made available to new medical school graduates to pursue their post-graduate training and become licensed practicing physicians. Moreover, in response to the current and increasing physician workforce shortage, the number of osteopathic medical school graduates is growing and is expected to continue to rise. This legislation would result in expanded access to patient care and is of high importance to many rural and underserved areas, which already face shortages of primary care providers.

On behalf of AACOM, I offer our support for this legislation, and I thank you for your steadfast leadership to support a health care system that will enable current osteopathic medical students and future physicians to provide 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