

April 5, 2019

The Honorable Brian Babin
U.S. House of Representatives
2236 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Babin:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for H.R. 1554, the *Resident Education Deferred Interest Act of 2019*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in reintroducing this vital legislation, which seeks to allow interest-free deferment on student loans for borrowers serving in a medical or dental residency program.

AACOM leads and advocates for the full continuum of osteopathic medical education to improve the health of the public. Founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, AACOM represents all 35 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine—educating nearly 31,000 future physicians, 25 percent of all U.S. medical students—at 55 teaching locations in 32 U.S. states, as well as osteopathic graduate medical education professionals and trainees at U.S. medical centers, hospitals, clinics, and health systems.

As you may be aware, medical students graduate with relatively high debt compared to many other graduate students, which could deter individuals from seeking these advanced degrees in the future. Unlike other career paths, the high debt burden of physician education is frequently compounded by years of requisite post-graduate training. Consequently, total student loan repayment often exceeds two to three times the amount borrowed for these individuals. Therefore, it is critical to support graduate education policies such as H.R. 1554 that work to address the student debt burden for medical and dental residents that care for our nation's patients.

On behalf of AACOM, I offer our strong support for the *Resident Education Deferred Interest Act of 2019*, and I thank you for your steadfast leadership and dedication to supporting an education system that will enable osteopathic medical students to access a financially sustainable future.

Respectfully,



Stephen C. Shannon, DO, MPH
President and CEO