

April 5, 2021

The Honorable Terri Sewell
U.S. House of Representatives
2201 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Katko
U.S. House of Representatives
2428 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Suozzi
U.S. House of Representatives
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
2079 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Sewell, Katko, Suozzi, and Davis:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for the reintroduction of H.R. 2256, the *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2021*. As educators of future physicians, we support policies which aim to provide a solution to the physician workforce shortage.

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 (GME) professionals and trainees at U.S. medical centers, hospitals, clinics, and health systems.

H.R. 2256 would build on the 1,000 new Medicare-supported GME positions included in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*. The bill would increase the number of Medicare-supported GME positions by 2,000 per year for seven years, for a total of 14,000 new slots, thus helping ensure that additional GME slots are available to the rising number of osteopathic graduates as they become licensed physicians. We especially value provisions in the bill that give priority to hospitals in rural and medically underserved areas, hospitals in states with new medical schools, and hospitals already training over their caps. Improving access to care in rural and underserved areas is an important goal of OME. In fact, 40 percent of graduating 2019-2020 osteopathic medical students plan to practice in a medically underserved or health shortage area; of those, 45 percent plan to practice in a rural community¹.

¹ https://www.aacom.org/docs/default-source/data-and-trends/aacom-2019-2020-graduating-seniors-survey-summary-report.pdf?sfvrsn=406a0897_4

On behalf of AACOM, thank you again for your steadfast leadership to support robust policies that strengthen our nation's healthcare system.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert A. Cain, DO". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light gray rectangular box.

Robert A. Cain, DO, FACOI, FAODME
President and CEO