

May 17, 2021

The Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senate
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Todd Young
United States Senate
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
United States Senate
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Kaine, Young, Reed and Cassidy:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for S. 610, the *Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in re-introducing this vital legislation, which aims to reduce and prevent suicide, burnout and mental and behavioral health conditions among healthcare professionals.

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 37 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs)—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 professionals and trainees at U.S. medical centers, hospitals, clinics and health systems.

AACOM lauds your efforts to address the many factors contributing to this crisis. Understanding and treating physician and other healthcare professional burnout, a condition that has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, is critical not only to well-being, but also to patient health and system efficiency. Physicians have long suffered from high rates of depression, burnout, addiction and suicide. The current crisis has made circumstances far more dire as the healthcare workforce faces unprecedented challenges and unimaginable emotional and psychological distress responding to COVID-19. Too often, the stigma associated with seeking mental health treatment prevents physicians and other providers from accessing life-saving care and resources, leaving them to suffer in silence. We must ensure that we are prioritizing and protecting the mental well-being of our healthcare workforce, particularly our frontline workers. These professionals continue to risk their lives to protect us from this deadly pandemic and are at a high risk of suffering from severe and potentially long-term symptoms of burnout and mental distress.

Thank you for championing S. 610, which promotes physician and other healthcare professionals' well-being, especially at a time of continued global crisis. We look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation. For questions or additional information, please contact me at dbergman@aacom.org.

Sincerely,



David Bergman, JD
Vice President, Government Relations

May 17, 2021

The Honorable Susan Wild
U.S. House of Representatives
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Judy Chu
U.S. House of Representatives
2423 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi
U.S. House of Representatives
115 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David McKinley
U.S. House of Representatives
2239 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Wild, Krishnamoorthi, Chu, and McKinley:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer strong support for H.R. 1667, the *Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in re-introducing this vital legislation, which aims to reduce and prevent suicide, burnout and mental and behavioral health conditions among healthcare professionals.

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 37 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs)—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 professionals and trainees at U.S. medical centers, hospitals, clinics and health systems.

AACOM lauds your efforts to address the many factors contributing to this crisis. Understanding and treating physician and other healthcare professional burnout, a condition that has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, is critical not only to well-being, but also to patient health and system efficiency. Physicians have long suffered from high rates of depression, burnout, addiction and suicide. The current crisis has made circumstances far more dire as the healthcare workforce faces unprecedented challenges and unimaginable emotional and psychological distress responding to COVID-19. Too often, the stigma associated with seeking mental health treatment prevents physicians and other providers from accessing life-saving care and resources, leaving them to suffer in silence. We must ensure that we are prioritizing and protecting the mental well-being of our healthcare workforce, particularly our frontline workers. These professionals continue to risk their lives to protect us from this deadly pandemic and are at a high risk of suffering from severe and potentially long-term symptoms of burnout and mental distress.

Thank you for championing H.R. 1667, which promotes physician and other healthcare professionals' well-being, especially at a time of continued global crisis. We look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation. For questions or additional information, please contact me at dbergman@aacom.org.

Sincerely,



David Bergman, JD
Vice President, Government Relations