

July 27, 2018

The Honorable Cory Gardner
U.S. Senate
354 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gardner:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer staunch support for S. 3014, the *Rural Physician Workforce Production Act of 2018*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in introducing this vital legislation, which seeks to alleviate the nation's physician shortage, particularly in rural communities across the country.

AACOM represents the 34 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 51 teaching locations in 32 states. In the current academic year, these colleges are educating nearly 29,000 future physicians – more than 20 percent of all U.S. medical students. Six of the colleges are public and 28 are private institutions.

AACOM strongly lauds your efforts in working to address this crisis in our nation's health care system. As educators of future physicians, we strongly support policies, including the *Rural Physician Workforce Production Act of 2018*, that aims to address the physician workforce shortages in rural medically underserved areas where the shortage is dire and is expected to continue on this trajectory without effective solutions. This innovative legislation would help address this matter by expanding rural medical residency training programs by establishing comparable per resident payment for residents training in rural hospitals and eliminating rural hospital residency caps to encourage growth of rural training programs, particularly across various medical specialties.

On behalf of AACOM, I offer our strong support for the *Rural Physician Workforce Production Act of 2018*, 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 care to the patients they serve.

Respectfully,



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