

July 9, 2020

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

The Honorable John Katko
U.S. House of Representatives
2457 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frederica Wilson
U.S. House of Representatives
2445 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Krishnamoorthi, Katko, and Wilson:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer support for H.R. 7255, the *Coronavirus Health Care Worker Wellness Act*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in introducing this vital legislation, which would provide mental health resources for frontline health care workers, and authorize research to investigate the immediate mental health impacts caused by COVID-19, as well as the underlying causes contributing to burnout and other mental health issues experienced by health care workers.

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 36 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine—educating nearly 31,000 future physicians, 25 percent of all U.S. medical students—at 57 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.

Understanding and addressing physician and other health care worker burnout, a condition that precedes and has been strongly amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, is critical not only to the well-being of the health care workforce, but to the larger health care system and patients. Health care workers already suffer from high rates of depression, burnout, addiction, and suicide, and the current crisis is making circumstances more dire as clinicians face unprecedented challenges and unimaginable emotional and psychological distress. As our nation navigates the mental health crisis brought on by the pandemic, we must care for our frontline health care workers who are at a significantly high risk of suffering from severe and potentially long-term symptoms of burnout and mental health conditions.

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As medical educators training the future physician workforce, we thank you for working to support the frontline health care workers who are currently risking their lives to deliver critical care to communities across the country during this pandemic. On behalf of AACOM, I offer our support for the *Coronavirus Health Care Worker Wellness Act*, and I thank you for your steadfast leadership and dedication in addressing such an urgent need during this unprecedented time.

Respectfully,

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

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