

May 18, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear President Biden, Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Advocacy Coalition, the undersigned groups urge you to ensure that federal support for physician training is included in upcoming legislative efforts to improve the nation's infrastructure. Physicians are a vital part of our health care infrastructure, and it is critical that we train more in order to meet the needs of our diverse and growing nation, ensure patient access to care, and prepare for the next public health crisis.

The United States is facing a shortage of between 54,100 and 139,000 physicians by 2033 – a dearth that is almost certain to be exacerbated by rising rates of physician burnout and early retirement due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The physician workforce, much like our population, is aging, with nearly 45 percent of active physicians in the United States being age 55 and older. Access issues persist for patients in both rural and urban underserved communities, and in both primary and specialty care, and it is crucial that we invest in our country's health care infrastructure by helping provide them with the physicians they need and improved access care.

Congress made an initial investment in shoring up the physician workforce by providing 1,000 new Medicare-supported GME positions in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021– the first increase of its kind in nearly twenty-five years. However, more is needed to substantially increase the number of physicians. Our groups urge you to take this opportunity to further invest in the physician workforce by again increasing the number of Medicare-support GME positions. The Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2021 (S. 834/H.R. 2256) is bipartisan legislation that would take steps to alleviate the physician shortage by gradually providing 14,000 new Medicare-supported GME positions. Much like the 2020 year-end package, these positions would be targeted to hospitals with diverse needs, including rural teaching hospitals,

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hospitals serving patients in health professional shortage areas, hospitals in states with new medical schools or branch campuses, and hospitals already training over their Medicare caps. The legislation would also take steps to improve physician workforce diversity by commissioning a report to specifically look at ways to create a more diverse clinical workforce.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the critical need for additional federal investment in our health care infrastructure, and in particular the need for more physicians. We urge you to invest in additional Medicare-supported GME positions as part of your infrastructure efforts, and we look forward to working with you to expand the physician workforce and ensure that patients have access to the care they need.

Sincerely,

Association of American Medical Colleges
Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM)
Alliance of Specialty Medicine
America's Essential Hospitals
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Academy of Sleep Medicine
American Association of Chairs of Departments of Psychiatry
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Academic Addiction Medicine (ACAAM)
American College of Clinical Pharmacology(R)
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Physicians
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Geriatrics Society
American Medical Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Nephrology

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American Urological Association
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of Academic Health Centers
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
Association of Academic Physiatrists
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools, Inc.
Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics
Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers
Association of University Professors of Neurology
Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology
Catholic Health Association of the United States
College of American Pathologists
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Greater New York Hospital Association
Healthcare Association of New York State
Heart Failure Society of America
Illinois Health and Hospital Association
Medical Group Management Association
National AHEC Organization
National Association of Spine Specialists
Premier Healthcare Alliance
Society of Academic Associations of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of Neurological Surgeons
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
Vizient, Inc.