

July 9, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-226, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-255, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-204, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senate Majority Leader McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and House Minority Leader McCarthy:

The COVID-19 pandemic has stressed our nation's health care system in myriad unprecedented ways. Across the country, physicians and providers have mobilized on the front lines of this crisis to deliver care to their patients, at times in the most challenging conditions. COVID-19 is just the latest example that the U.S., which has fewer physicians per capita than other comparable countries, is in dire need of more doctors, not only to treat a growing and aging population, but also to respond to public health emergencies like COVID-19.

To date, Congress has passed four supplemental spending bills that have provided desperately needed relief to providers and patients across the nation. **As Congress continues to address the COVID-19 public health emergency by allocating additional resources and making necessary policy changes, the undersigned organizations representing over 60 health care associations and specialty societies urge you to take action now to better prepare the nation for its next health care crisis by including the *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019* (S. 348/H.R. 1763) in the next comprehensive COVID-19 supplemental.** This bipartisan legislation would provide a gradual and responsible increase in Medicare support for physician residency training through graduate medical education (GME) to address the impending national physician workforce shortage.

The demand for physicians continues to grow faster than supply, leading to a projected shortfall of 54,100 and 139,000 physicians by 2033. Physicians are a critical element of our health care infrastructure and workforce, and if we do not address this impending problem, patients from pediatrics to geriatrics will find it difficult to access the care they need. While this is a serious issue for all of us, it is especially problematic because of our aging population and physician retirement. Though shortfalls will affect all Americans, the most vulnerable populations, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, will be the first to feel the impact of the deficit

of physicians. We are particularly concerned for our senior population because as the numbers of new Medicare enrollees grows so does their need for and utilization of health care services.

**As you consider additional supplemental legislation to address the COVID-19 emergency, we urge you to include the Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2019 to ensure patients have access to care, build a robust physician workforce, and prepare for the next public health emergency** – whether that is a pandemic, a natural disaster, or other public health challenge. We look forward to working together to support the training of future physicians and to secure the passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health  
Academy for Professionalism in Health Care  
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
Alliance of Specialty Medicine  
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 Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Academy of Sleep Medicine  
American Association for Anatomy  
American Association of Chairs of Department 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 Board of Medical Specialties  
American College of Academic Addiction Medicine  
American College of Cardiology  
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 Gastroenterological Association  
American Neurological Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Society for Clinical Pathology  
American Society of Addiction Medicine

American Society of Breast Surgeons  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
American Urological Association  
America's Essential Hospitals  
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries  
Association of Academic Physiatrists  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Medical and Graduate Departments of Biochemistry  
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools  
Association of University Professors of Neurology  
Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology  
Association of University Radiologists  
Children's Hospital Association  
College of American Pathologists  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Federation of American Hospitals  
Greater New York Hospital Association  
Healthcare Association of New York State  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
Heart Rhythm Society  
Illinois Health and Hospital Association  
Medical Group Management Association  
National Association of Spine Specialists  
Premier Healthcare Alliance  
Society for Academic Emergency Medicine  
Society of Academic Associations of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Student National Medical Association  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
Vizient, Inc.