



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Physicians, Medical Educators, Community Health Centers  
Strongly Support *Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019***

Our organizations applaud the introduction of S. 304, the *Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019*, and urge the Senate to quickly pass this important legislation. We thank Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Jon Tester (D-MT), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Doug Jones (D-AL), John Boozman (R-AR), Joe Manchin (D-WV), and Kamala Harris (D-CA) for their commitment to ensuring that our nation has a strong and robust primary care workforce. Furthermore, we thank Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) for their leadership in introducing S. 192, the *Community and Public Health Programs Extension Act*, which will extend for five years federal funding for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program, community health centers, the National Health Service Corps, and two other federal health programs. These programs are set to expire at the end of the fiscal year.

The THCGME Program, established in 2010 and reauthorized in 2015 and 2018 has been, by any measure, an overwhelming success. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the program supported the training of 732 residents in 57 primary care residency programs, across 24 states. Since 2011, the program has supported the training of over 630 new primary care physicians and dentists that have graduated and entered the workforce. Importantly, physicians trained in teaching health center programs are more likely to practice in underserved communities, increasing access to care for the country's most vulnerable patient populations.

The value of primary care is well documented. In fact, individuals who have a continuous relationship with a primary care physician are more likely to be healthier and use fewer health care resources. Research shows that our nation faces a primary care physician workforce shortage. The THCGME Program has proven its ability to efficiently increase the number of primary care physicians trained.

This highly successful and impactful program is set to expire on September 30, 2019 unless Congress takes action to reauthorize and fund it. The legislation not only reauthorizes the program, but also provides enhanced funding and a pathway for increasing the number of residents trained. Most important, the legislation will continue to build the primary care physician pipeline necessary to reduce costs, improve patient care, and support underserved rural and urban communities.

We are extremely pleased that members of both parties are working together to extend this vital program that brings health care to medically underserved communities across the nation. Our organizations strongly support *Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act of 2019* and call on the House of Representatives and Senate to ensure that the THCGME Program is reauthorized and appropriately financed by September 30.

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