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COUNCIL OF OSTEOPATHIC  
STUDENT GOVERNMENT PRESIDENTS  
A COUNCIL OF THE  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE



**amsa**  
American Medical Student Association

**SOMA**  
STUDENT OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



March 26, 2015

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, which represent medical students across the nation, **we urge you to immediately consider the House-passed Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (H.R. 2), which includes language extending the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program and the National Health Service Corps (NHSC).** As you know, without congressional action, funding for these programs will expire at the end of fiscal year (FY) 2015. Sustainability for these programs is critical to addressing primary care physician workforce shortages, while delivering health care services to underserved communities most in need.

Given the numerous challenges currently facing the U.S. health care system – the changing role of the physician in health care; a rapidly evolving and diverse patient population; a health care system undergoing transformation; a physician workforce shortage that is projected to worsen over the coming years; and the rising number of medical school graduates facing a finite number of residency slots, support for graduate medical education (GME) is critical to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality health care. With nearly 90 percent of medical care rendered in ambulatory settings, GME should support training to occur in these settings.

The THCGME Program aims to increase the number of primary care physicians that serve the communities most in need. THCs currently train more than 550 medical and dental residents and are providing more than 700,000 primary care visits in underserved rural and urban communities. The THCGME Program provides long-term benefits and is critical to ensure the stability and continuity of the nation's medical residency training programs. The NHSC supports physicians and other health professionals who practice in health professional shortage areas across the U.S. In FY14, the NHSC had a total of 9,242 primary care clinicians providing health care services. The NHSC projects that a field strength of 15,000 primary care clinicians will be in health professional shortage areas in FY16.

*These programs expire in FY15; therefore, the undersigned groups strongly urge your immediate consideration of the House-passed Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (H.R. 2), which extends the THCGME and NHSC programs, which are essential to future physicians across the country and the patients they serve.*

Sincerely,

Carisa Champion-Lippmann, OMS-V, National Chair - Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents

Brittani Kessler, DO, National President - American Medical Student Association

Gina Routh, OMS-III, National President - Student Osteopathic Medical Association

Topaz Sampson, MS-IV, National President - Student National Medical Association

Alex Cortez, MS-IV, and Ana Mauro, MS-III, Co-Presidents - Latino Medical Student Association Midwest