

COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC FAMILY MEDICINE

Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
North American Primary Care Research Group
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine



April 9, 2014

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
Chairman
Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

On behalf of the Council of Academic Family Medicine, which includes the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM), the Association of Departments of Family Medicine (ADFM), the Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors (AFMRD), and the North American Primary Care Research Group (NAPCRG), we write to thank you for your leadership in working to expand the primary care workforce of the United States. Your efforts to recognize and reinvigorate key workforce programs are critical to increasing access, improving health, and reducing costs for our nation.

We commend you on the introduction of the *Expanding Primary Care Access and Workforce Act*, and wish to express our support for the bill. This legislation includes the reauthorization and expansion of critical workforce programs, including the Teaching Health Center (THC) and National Health Service Corps (NHSC.) We also appreciate your recognition that Medicare graduate medical education (GME) positions cannot continue to grow without direction – effectively without sustaining support for primary care. We applaud your recognition that Congress must invest in key programs and reimbursement for primary care as well as residency training in family medicine.

In addition, we applaud your recognition that strong departments of, and clerkships in, family medicine are vital ingredients to improving the numbers of medical students who select careers in primary care. We look forward to continuing to work with you as you develop this legislation through the legislative process. We encourage you to consider support for the reauthorization of the Primary Care Training and Enhancement Program (Title VII, Section 747 of the Public Health Service Act) in this or other legislation, in order to continue this vital primary care workforce program.

We appreciate your continued leadership in identifying and supporting a strong primary care workforce as an essential ingredient of a quality health care system.

Sincerely,

John Saultz, MD MSPH
President
Society of Teachers of
Family Medicine

Todd Shaffer, MD, MBA
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