

November 18, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

As you negotiate a final fiscal year (FY) 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) bill, we urge you to include \$30 million for the Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment Program (PSLRP) – the amount included in the Senate Labor-HHS draft – and pass this bill before the current continuing resolution (CR) expires on December 3. The 66 undersigned organizations are dedicated to improving the health and well-being of children and adolescents and believe this investment in the PSLRP will improve access to the specialized care children require.

Once funded, the recently authorized PSLRP will provide loan repayment for pediatric subspecialists and child mental health professionals who care for children in underserved areas. The program will address critical shortages of these highly trained professionals by lessening financial disincentives for pursuing pediatric specialty training. Without a federal investment in the pediatric subspecialty workforce, many children will continue to face long wait times for care, need to travel long distances to receive that care, or forego care altogether. Our organizations have long advocated to increase access to pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, and child and adolescent mental health care for young people, including those with chronic conditions and serious acute illnesses who require specialized care.

With this investment, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) can begin the work of implementing this program and providing much-needed loan repayment to pediatric subspecialists. This targeted financial support will help address high medical school or other graduate school debt that serves as a barrier to training in pediatric subspecialties and help address underlying economic factors that are driving subspecialty shortages. Congress cannot afford to delay action on a FY 2022 Labor-HHS spending bill. Because FY 2022 would represent the first appropriation for PSLRP, a CR would leave this critical program unfunded.

We appreciate your commitment to investing in the pediatric subspecialty workforce and urge you to ensure this funding is included in a final FY 2022 Labor-HHS spending bill.

Sincerely,

AANS/CNS Joint Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery
Academic Pediatric Association
American Academy of Dermatology Association

American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Art Therapy Association
American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American Association of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
American College of Cardiology
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Rheumatology
American Epilepsy Society
American Pediatric Society
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychoanalytic Association
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
American Society of Pediatric Neurosurgeons
American Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology
American Thoracic Society
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Arthritis Foundation
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Child Neurology Society
Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance
Children's Hospital Association
Children's Wisconsin
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Council of Pediatric Subspecialties (CoPS)
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action
Endocrine Society
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis (AiArthritis)
International OCD Foundation
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
March of Dimes
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Coalition for Infant Health

Nemours Children's Health
North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology
North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition
Pediatric Endocrine Society
Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America
Pediatric Policy Council
Prevent Blindness
School Social Work Association of America
Scoliosis Research Society
Societies for Pediatric Urology
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics
Society for Pediatric Dermatology
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Pediatric Urology
Society of Critical Care Medicine
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
ZERO TO THREE