



Sound Policy. Quality Care.

May 4, 2015

Honorable Bill Nelson  
United States Senate  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Support of S. 1148, the “Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015”**

Dear Senators Nelson and Schumer:

As the Alliance of Specialty Medicine (Alliance), our mission is to advocate for sound federal health care policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care. As patient and physician advocates, the Alliance writes in support of your legislation, **S. 1148, the “Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015**, which would increase the number of Graduate Medical Education (GME) residency positions by 15,000 over the next 5 years in order to tackle the severe physician manpower shortage. Clearly, this shortage will only worsen with the health care expansion in the Affordable Care Act in addition to the baby boomers entering their senior years.

While the Alliance acknowledges the need to increase the number of available primary care providers, this only addresses part of the problem. According to 2015 study, the United States will face an overall shortage of between 46,000-90,000 physicians by 2025. Specialty shortages will be particularly large, including neurosurgeons, urologists, cardiologists, gastroenterologists, and orthopaedic surgeons. Given the increased demand created for their services by an aging population and expanded insurance coverage, we need to take steps now to ensure a fully trained specialty physician workforce for the future. We are in agreement that this legislation will begin to help improve the acute shortage of specialty physicians.

The Alliance recognizes that both primary care providers and specialists are an integral part of American medicine. We support the report included as part of your legislation that would study the needs of the US healthcare system and allocate residencies accordingly.

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American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery • American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American College of Mohs Surgery • American Gastroenterological Association • American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association  
American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery • American Society of Echocardiography • American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
American Urological Association • Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations • Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
National Association of Spine Specialists • Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions • Society for Excellence in Eyecare

Alliance of Specialty Medicine  
May 4, 2015  
Page 2

Your legislation would improve the nation's graduate medical education system and help to preserve access to essential health services for many Americans. For these reasons, the undersigned organizations of the Alliance extend our strong support of your legislation, S. 1148, the "Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015."

Sincerely,

American Academy of Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American College of Mohs Surgery  
American Gastroenterological Association  
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Society for Excellence in Eyecare