

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 19, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

As bipartisan bicameral negotiations begin to unfold in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress about the future of the nation's health programs, we write to urge House Leadership to support a program that currently is having a demonstrable impact on primary care physician workforce development – the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) program.

Currently, THCs are training more than 500 primary care physicians and dentists at 60 training sites located in 24 states.<sup>1</sup> THCs are located in federally qualified health centers, rural health clinics, and tribal clinics – organizations that care for underserved communities and populations. THC programs have expanded access to care for thousands of patients and have created a physician and dentist workforce pipeline for those communities.

The TCHGME program, funded since 2011 and set to expire on September 30, has increased the numbers of primary care physicians and dentists training to care for underserved populations nationwide. They also play an important role in

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Graham Center: Teaching Health Center GME Funding Instability Threatens Program Viability | Brown, Klink

distributing physicians to communities outside of large urban areas where most teaching hospitals are located. Providing GME training opportunities in diverse geographic locations is important because we know that 55% of all family physicians practice within 100 miles of their residency program and 46% will practice within 50 miles of their training program.<sup>2</sup>

The THCGME program, in our opinion, has met its charge and is worthy of continued support. We look forward to working with you to enhance the program and allow for it to continue its remarkable work of training the next generation of primary care physicians and expanding access to vulnerable populations.

Sincerely,



Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress



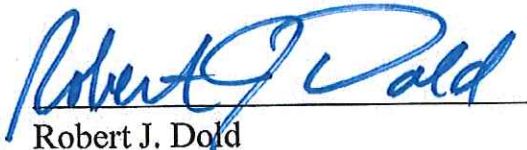
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<sup>2</sup> Family Medicine: Family Medicine graduate Proximity to Their Site of Training | February 2015 | Fagan, Gibbons, Finnegan, Petterson



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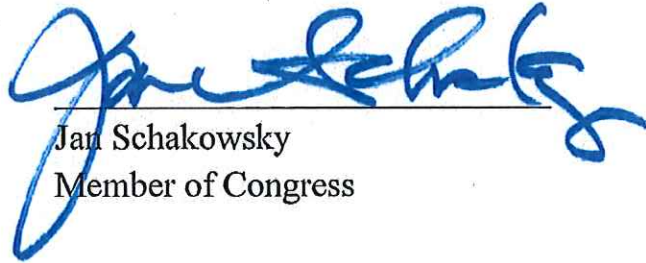
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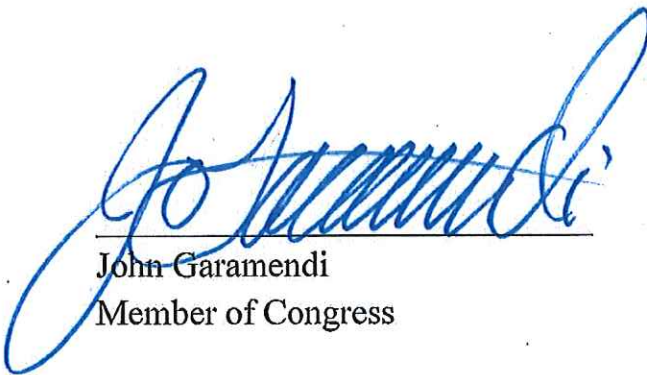
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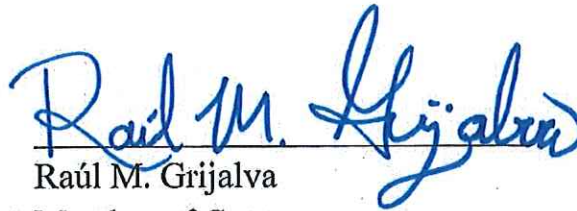
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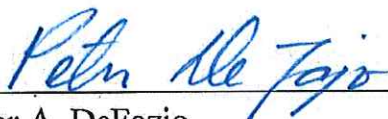
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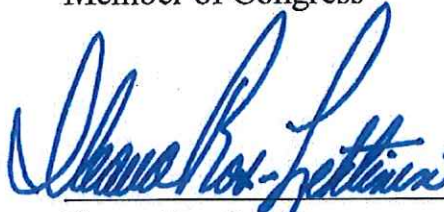
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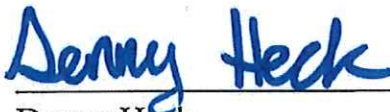
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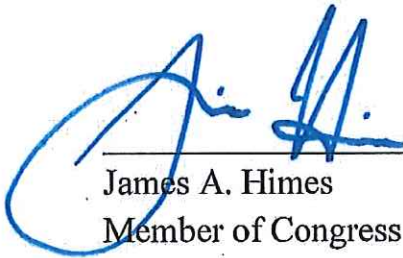
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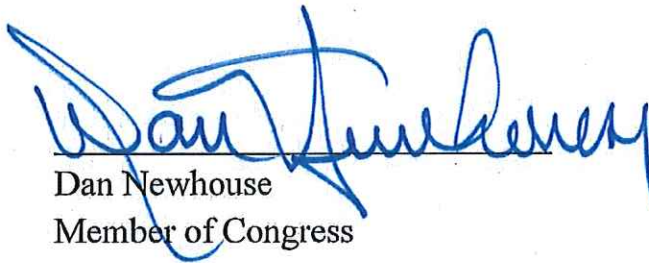
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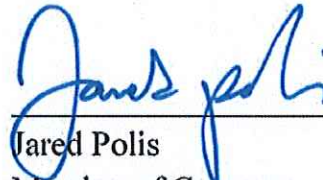
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