



September 12, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, United States Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader, United States Senate
Washington, DC

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader McCarthy and Minority Leader Schumer:

I write on behalf of the 134,600 family physicians and medical students represented by the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) to express our growing concerns regarding the potential expiration of the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) program. Unless Congress acts, authorization and funding for the THCGME program is set to expire in less than 20 days, on September 30, 2019. I write to express our strong support for the THCGME program and call upon the House and Senate to take the necessary actions to reauthorize and fund this important program before September 30.

The THCGME program is, without question, one of the most successful, efficiently run programs in the country. It is a mission-focused program that has a proven track record of achieving its legislative mandate of training the next generation of primary care physicians. Since its inception, this program has successfully trained over 1000 primary care physicians and dentists who, in return, have established practices and provided high-quality care to millions of Americans. What's more, most family physicians practice within 100 miles of residency programs, helping to remedy the uneven distribution of physicians in rural and underserved areas.

Earlier this year, both the House Energy & Commerce and Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee favorably reported multi-year reauthorization legislation out of their respective committees. Action taken by the Committees of jurisdiction has produced legislation that is now ready for consideration by the House and Senate. To this end, we urge you to bring reauthorization legislation to the House and Senate floor prior to September 30th.

STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

President
John Cullen, MD
Valdez, AK

President-elect
Gary LeRoy, MD
Dayton, OH

Board Chair
Michael Munger, MD
Overland Park, KS

Directors
Robert Raspa, MD, *Orange Park, FL*
Leonard Reeves, MD, *Rome, GA*
Ada Stewart, MD, *Columbia, SC*
Sterling Ransone, MD, *Deltaville, VA*
Windel Stracener, MD, *Richmond, IN*
Erica Swegler MD, *Austin, TX*

James Ellzy, MD, *Washington, DC*
Dennis Gingrich, MD, *Hershey, PA*
Tochi Iroku-Malize, MD, *Bay Shore, NY*
LaTasha Seliby Perkins, MD (New Physician Member), *Arlington, VA*
Michelle Byrne, MD (Resident Member), *Chicago, IL*
Chandler Stisher (Student Member), *Brownsboro, AL*

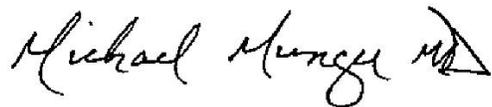
Speaker
Alan Schwartzstein, MD
Oregon, WI

Vice Speaker
Russell Kohl, MD
Stilwell, KS

Executive Vice President
Douglas E. Henley, MD
Leawood, KS

The introduction of unnecessary uncertainty regarding the program's future potentially damages the THCGME program. This program is deserving of immediate, long-term reauthorization and immediate Congressional action on this program is of the highest importance to the AAFP. Given that the THCGME program has unwavering bipartisan support, we see no reason why reauthorization should be further delayed. We stand ready to assist you in achieving the enactment of reauthorization legislation prior to September 30.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Munger MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a distinct loop at the end of the "M" and a sharp, upward-pointing stroke at the end of the "D".

Michael L. Munger, MD, FAAFP
Board Chair