



American College of Osteopathic Internists • Stay True to Why You Pursued Medicine

May 16, 2024

The Honorable Wicker
U.S. Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert Casey
U.S. Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wicker and Senator Casey:

The American College of Osteopathic Internists (ACOI), representing the nation's osteopathic internists, medical subspecialists, fellows, residents, and students, is pleased to offer its endorsement of S. 3968, the *Community Training, Education, and Access for Medical Students Act* (Community TEAMS Act). ACOI appreciates your leadership to improve patient access to care in rural and underserved health professional shortage areas.

About 60 percent of U.S. colleges of osteopathic medicine are located in a federally designated health professional shortage area, and 64 percent require clinical rotations in rural and underserved communities, making them well-situated to help address physician workforce shortages, especially in areas of the country where the need is greatest.

The grants created by S. 3968 would provide opportunities for colleges of osteopathic and allopathic medicine to secure more clinical rotations and learning opportunities in rural and medically underserved areas in partnership with federally qualified health centers, rural clinics and other health care facilities with the goal of strengthening the physician workforce in these communities.

The practice of medicine in rural and medically underserved areas is unique because resources can be limited, including access to hospitals, testing and specialists, when compared to more urban areas. Medical schools can teach about these barriers, but S. 3968 creates opportunities for medical students to experience them firsthand as they care for and improve the health of patients in these communities.

Doctors of osteopathic medicine have a strong history of serving rural and underserved areas. This legislation will help improve the pipeline of osteopathic physicians who want to practice in these areas. ACOI calls on Congress to pass S. 3968 and to appropriate funding to the Health Resources and Services Administration to carry out the bill's objectives.

ACOI.org

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The ACOI offers itself as a resource and looks forward to working with you to advance S. 3968. For questions or requests for additional information, please contact Tim McNichol, ACOI Deputy Executive Director, at tmcnichol@acoi.org or (301) 231-8877.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is stylized and appears to read "R. HASTY" with "DO FACOI" written above it.

Robert T. Hasty, DO, FACOI
President, American College of Osteopathic Internists