



Sound Policy. Quality Care.

WORKFORCE/GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION
S. 834/H.R. 2256, *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act*
H.R. 944, to Expand Access to Care in Rural Areas

REQUESTS

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine urges members of Congress to **cosponsor and advance the bipartisan *Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act (S. 834/H.R. 2256)*** and **H.R. 944**, bipartisan legislation to expand access to care in rural areas. S. 834 was introduced in the Senate by Sens. Menendez (D-NJ), Boozman (R-AR), and Schumer (D-NY). H.R. 2256 was introduced in the House by Reps. Sewell (D-AL), Katko (R-NY), Suozzi (D-NY), and Davis (R-IL). H.R. 944 was introduced by Representatives McKinley (R-WV) and Welch (D-VT).

BILL SUMMARIES

To address the physician workforce shortages in many specialties that will jeopardize access to care, the ***Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act*** (S. 834/H.R. 2256) will improve the nation's Graduate Medical Education (GME) system and help to preserve access to specialty care by increasing Medicare-supported GME residency slots by 14,000 over the next seven years; specifying priorities for distributing the new slots (e.g., states with new medical schools); and studying strategies to increase the diversity of the health professional workforce.

To address the specialty physician workforce shortage in rural America, **H.R. 944** would authorize a loan repayment program to encourage specialty medicine physicians to serve in rural communities experiencing a shortage. The loan repayment program would provide up to \$250,000 over a six-year period of obligated service. Specialty medicine physician is defined as a physician whose specialty has a baseline projected demand that exceeds the projected supply.

BACKGROUND

The Alliance thanks Congress for taking the first step to address this issue by approving 1,000 new Medicare-supported GME slots in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021* (P.L. 116-260). However, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the United States will face an overall shortage of up to 124,000 physicians by 2034. While the Alliance acknowledges the need to increase the number of available primary care providers, we note that specialty shortages will be particularly large, including neurosurgeons, urologists, cardiologists, gastroenterologists, plastic and reconstructive surgeons, orthopaedic surgeons, and general 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. These measures will begin to help improve the acute shortage of specialty physicians.

CONTACT

To cosponsor **S. 834**, please contact Swarna_Vallurupalli@menendez.senate.gov (Sen. Menendez) or Ryan_Losak@boozman.senate.gov (Sen. Boozman).

To cosponsor **H.R. 2256**, please contact Earl.Flood@mail.house.gov (Rep. Sewell) or Jennifer.Tyler@mail.house.gov (Rep. Katko).

To cosponsor **H.R. 944**, please contact Kirsten.Wing@mail.house.gov (Rep. McKinley) or gabie.camozzi@mail.house.gov (Rep. Welch).