

October 27, 2021

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cortez Masto and Murkowski:

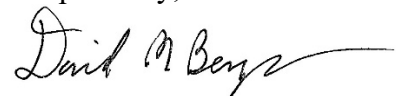
On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), I offer support for S. 2874, the *Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act of 2021*. Thank you for your commitment and leadership in introducing this important legislation, which would make Indian Health Service (IHS) loan repayments and scholarships tax-free, saving the agency over \$9.1 million and funding an additional 190 awards without increasing the Service's annual appropriation.

AACOM leads and advocates for the full continuum of osteopathic medical education (OME) to improve the health of the public. Founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, AACOM represents all 37 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine—educating nearly 34,000 future physicians, 25 percent of all U.S. medical students—at 58 teaching locations in 33 U.S. states, as well as osteopathic graduate medical education professionals and trainees at U.S. medical centers, hospitals, clinics and health systems.

As educators of future physicians, AACOM supports federal health care workforce policies, such as the *Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act*, which recruit and retain physicians and other health care professionals in medically underserved areas. The IHS currently has over 1,398 vacancies for health care professionals, and the IHS Health Professions Scholarship Program and the Loan Repayment Program play a significant role in the recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals needed to fill these vacancies. S. 2874 would deliver vital support to the IHS health workforce and provide needed care and services to underserved populations.

Thank you for your dedication in supporting a program that will enable future physicians to provide health care to patients in our nation's rural and medically underserved communities. AACOM looks forward to working with you to advance S. 2874. For questions or additional information, please contact me at dbergman@aacom.org.

Respectfully,



David Bergman, JD
Vice President of Government Relations