

WISCONSIN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

March 16, 2016

The Honorable Reid Ribble
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515



Dear Representative Ribble:

The Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) would like to express strong support for H.R. 4732 and S. 2671, the Advancing Medical Resident Training in Community Hospitals Act, authored by U.S. Rep. Reid Ribble, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind and U.S. Senator Bill Nelson of Florida. WHA appreciates the Wisconsin Delegation's full support for this legislation and we are asking for quick action in order to correct this technical glitch in the federal physician residency program rules. This glitch is negatively impacting several Wisconsin hospitals.

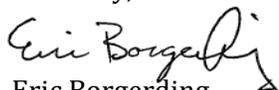
By way of background, several years ago WHA analyzed our state's future physician capacity needs. That research was included in our Physician Workforce Report: "[100 Physicians a Year, An Imperative for Wisconsin](#)." The report documented that Wisconsin faces a shortage of physicians over the next 20 years and that action must be taken to meet the challenge. [To read WHA's complete report, please log on to: <http://www.wha.org/physicianWorkforce.aspx>.]

Since that time WHA and other stakeholders have worked collaboratively to meet Wisconsin's physician capacity needs. We are seeing results. Examples of results include: formal creation of the Wisconsin Council on Medical Education and Workforce [<http://www.wcmew.org>], of which WHA is a founding member; and, new education and training models like the Medical College of Wisconsin's (MCW) Community Medical Education Program, which includes the creation of the new MCW campus in Green Bay. In addition, WHA has worked with our Governor and State Legislature to secure millions of dollars in funding through our state budget for MCW as well as help fund new residency programs. Finally, our hospitals and systems themselves are investing hundreds of millions of dollars to train health professions.

One of the key facts to come out of the WHA physician report is that some 86 percent of physicians who attended medical school in Wisconsin and completed their residency in Wisconsin *stayed* in Wisconsin. That is why we strongly believe new graduate medical education positions need to be in place so that these medical school graduates will have a place to continue their training. H.R. 4732 and S. 2671 are companion bills that address a CMS glitch which is keeping HSHS St. Vincent Hospital and Bellin Health in Green Bay from increasing their residency slots to meet these needs. With a new crop of MCW medical school graduates in the pipeline, these residency positions are absolutely essential.

WHA is committed to working to meet our state's healthcare workforce needs and we are asking Congress to assist our efforts by quickly acting on this technical correction. **WHA would like to express our appreciation to U.S. Rep. Reid Ribble and U.S. Rep. Ron Kind for proactive leadership on this legislation. We also thank Wisconsin's Delegation for joining on as original cosponsors of this bipartisan bill.** If WHA can be of assistance in the coming days, please reach out to Jenny Boese, VP-Federal Affairs & Advocacy, at 608-268-1816 or jboese@wha.org.

Sincerely,


Eric Borgerding
President & CEO