

December 5, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our 43,000 individual members, the American Hospital Association (AHA) requests that you pass the *Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act of 2013* (S. 1557), which would reauthorize the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program for fiscal years (FY) 2014 through 2018. The legislation passed the Senate last month and is awaiting consideration by the House.

Congress created the CHGME program in 1999 to support graduate medical education programs at children's hospitals that train resident physicians, enhance research capabilities and care for poor and medically underserved children in rural and inner-city areas. The program provides funding to independent children's hospitals in more than 30 states to train primary care pediatricians. Children's hospitals treat very few Medicare patients; therefore, they do not receive Medicare funding to support medical training of residents. The CHGME program addresses this inequity. The program helps independent children's hospitals train 49 percent of general pediatricians, 51 percent of all pediatric specialists and the majority of pediatric researchers.

In the face of a nationwide physician shortage and increased demand for health care services, the need for pediatricians is greater than ever. Not fully supporting the program would be detrimental to the mutual goals of strengthening the primary care workforce and ensuring timely access to critical, high-quality specialty care.

We ask you to advance S. 1557 in order to support our nation's pediatric caregivers.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

