

May 26, 2021

The Honorable Bradley Schneider  
U.S. House of Representatives  
300 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David McKinley  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2239 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Annie Kuster  
U.S. House of Representatives  
320 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Schneider, McKinley and Kuster:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, our clinician partners – including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers – and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) appreciates your continued leadership in promoting access to quality care in communities across the nation.

We are pleased to support your legislation, the Substance Use Disorder Workforce Act, which would help alleviate the critical shortage of opioid treatment providers by increasing resident physician slots in hospitals with programs focused on substance use disorder (SUD) treatment. As the nation continues to face a devastating public health crisis stemming from the opioid epidemic, we recognize that the shortage of SUD treatment providers results in lengthy waiting periods for treatment and increased mortality from opioid misuse and addiction.

Your legislation would address existing shortages by adding 1,000 Medicare-funded training positions in approved residency programs in addiction medicine, addiction psychiatry or pain medicine, with half of the new slots to be distributed in fiscal year (FY) 2024 to hospitals with established programs in these specialties. The remaining slots would be distributed from FY 2025 through FY 2028 to hospitals that demonstrate to the Secretary of Health and Human Services that they have established or will establish approved residency training programs in these specialties.



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These new slots would constitute a major step toward increasing access to SUD treatment for communities in need. We look forward to working with you to ensure passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

/s/

Stacey Hughes  
Executive Vice President