

Protect Children's Health: Fund Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME)

April 4, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Moran, Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program protects children's access to high quality medical care by providing independent children's hospitals with funding to support the training of pediatric providers. As groups dedicated to protecting and advancing the health of America's children, we thank the Senate and House appropriators for their longstanding bipartisan support of CHGME.

Today, we urge you to protect this important program and provide \$300 million in funding for CHGME in FY 2015. CHGME is an essential investment in our children's health care – in promoting prevention and primary care, expanding health care for vulnerable and underserved children, and ensuring access to care for all children.

Since Congress created the program in 1999 to address the gap in federal support for pediatric training, CHGME has increased the number of pediatric providers, addressed critical shortages in pediatric specialty care and improved children's access to care. Today, nearly half (49 percent) of all pediatric residents are trained by CHGME recipient hospitals. Overall, 51 percent of pediatric specialists are trained at CHGME hospitals, and in many specialties, such as pediatric surgery or critical care medicine, over 65 percent of physicians are trained at these children's hospitals.

Continued funding is essential to maintaining the gains that have been achieved under CHGME in strengthening the pediatric workforce pipeline. While much has been achieved, much remains to be done, as serious shortages in many pediatric specialties persist. Now is not the time to take a step backwards in pediatric medicine.

We recognize that the current budget climate is extraordinarily challenging and that Congress has a responsibility to carefully consider the nation's spending priorities. We respectfully request that the subcommittees continue their history of bipartisan support for the CHGME program and recommend \$300 million in funding in FY 2015 for this vital program.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Cardiology
American Dental Education Association
American Pediatric Society
American Thoracic Society
Ascension Health
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Pediatric Program Directors
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Health Fund
Children's Hospital Association
Council of Pediatric Subspecialties
First Focus
March of Dimes
Society for Pediatric Research