

January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the Council of Academic Family Medicine, which includes the Association of Departments of Family Medicine, the Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors, the North American Primary Care Research Group, and the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, we urge you to vote against a full repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. We understand that the Affordable Care Act as it was passed is not perfect and may need modification. We are supportive of any changes that meet our shared goals of improved health outcomes and reduced costs. Many provisions in the legislation took important steps toward achieving improved quality outcomes, while expanding coverage and access to health care for all Americans.

We appreciate past Congress's support for primary care and hope you will support critical programs that encourage the development of a robust primary care workforce. The Affordable Care Act contains key provisions that aim to increase the primary care workforce and accessibility to high quality care for all, especially those in rural and underserved areas, including:

- Enhanced health professions primary care training grant funding
- Primary care bonus payment
- Technical changes to Medicare GME non-hospital training
- Medicare GME slot re-distribution
- Rural Physician Training Program
- Primary Care Extension Service
- Teaching Health Centers
- Community Health Center expansion
- Patient Centered Medical Home
- National Health Service Corp expansion

This investment in our primary care workforce adds value to our health system. Investments in primary care are proven to lower costs in a health system and increase quality, leading to better health outcomes. These investments in primary care have an “excellent return on investment...better quality” and “bend the cost curve”<sup>1</sup>. These should be maintained as essential components of any effort to reform our health care system.

Furthermore, by investing in increased access to primary care through the Affordable Care Act, you are creating jobs in local communities and spurring economic development. A 2009 Robert Graham Center study estimated that one full time family physician creates an average of five full-time supporting staff positions and has an average economic impact of \$904,696 on local communities annually. Many provisions

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<sup>1</sup> Grumbach, Kevin , “High Value Primary Care: New Evidence on the Excellent Return on Investment in Primary Care,” Commonwealth Fund and Alliance for Health Reform Briefing, December 13, 2010

in the Affordable Care Act are investments that will have a substantial impact on the health of individuals as well as the local economy by reducing health care costs and creating jobs.

Politicians from both sides of the aisle can agree that common sense health care reforms centered on lowering health care costs and increasing accessibility to quality health care for all Americans is the most important priority. A full repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act would jeopardize many of these gains. We appreciate your efforts to help build a more efficient and effective primary care-based health care system.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Director of Government Relations, Hope Wittenberg, at (202) 986 3309 or at [hwittenberg@stfm.org](mailto:hwittenberg@stfm.org).

Sincerely,



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