



March 17, 2015

To: Representative Mack and Members of the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), the professional association for the more than 10,000 physicians, medical residents and medical students throughout Minnesota, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for House File 1447. The MMA appreciates the work of Representative Kiel to address the needs of our health care workforce.

The MMA has made expanding Minnesota's primary care physician workforce one of its top priorities. We brought together a task force to examine the issue, and some of their findings were as follows:

- Minnesota needs a state entity that will serve the purpose of providing guidance and analysis regarding how Minnesota can effectively meet its physician workforce objectives.
- Minnesota needs to examine ways to increase clinical training sites for medical students. The limited number of clinical training sites, the time needed to serve as a clinical preceptor, and the lack of incentives that are provided to clinical preceptors serve as barriers to students having meaningful clinical experiences.
- The limited number of available residency slots serve as a barrier to expanding our primary care physician workforce.

The threat to accessing quality health care in Minnesota is very real. This threat is particularly alarming for our state's most vulnerable populations, primarily those living in Minnesota's rural and underserved areas – areas where primary care physicians are already in short supply. Through House File 1447, Minnesota will begin to ensure (1) that we have an effective assessment of our workforce supply, demand, and distribution; (2) that we have an effective assessment of how medical education is funded to ensure physician workforce objectives are met; and (3) that barriers that exist in training medical students and residents to meet our physician workforce needs are addressed.

Thank you, again, for taking the steps necessary to ensure that our state is better equipped to assess our health care workforce needs, and for taking the steps needed to support continued patient access to care.

Sincerely,

Donald M. Jacobs, MD, FACS
President