

March 1, 2023

The Honorable Brian Babin, D.D.S.  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2236 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chrissy Houlahan  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1727 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Babin and Houlahan:

On behalf of the more than 84,000 members of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), I would like to express our strong support for the *Resident Education Deferred Interest (REDI) Act* (H.R. 1202). This important legislation would help support the physician workforce by allowing student loan borrowers in medical or dental internships or residency programs to defer student loan payments without interest until the completion of their programs.

Surgery is an essential element in the care of a community or region. In areas with an insufficient surgical workforce, patients in need of care must travel to a place with surgical capabilities, leading to delays in care and potentially suboptimal outcomes. A [2021 report](#) released by the American Association of Medical Colleges projects shortages of 15,800-30,200 in all surgical specialties by 2034. A shortage of surgeons is a key component of the crisis in the health care workforce and patient access to health care services because surgeons are the only physicians who are uniquely trained and qualified to provide certain necessary, lifesaving procedures.

The high cost of medical education contributes to the physician shortage. Physicians often accumulate immense student debt during their education, and then must undertake several years of residency training with low pay, during which time their student loans accrue significant interest. This financial burden poses a barrier for students wishing to pursue certain specialties, practice in underserved areas, or even enter the health care profession at all. The *REDI Act* will help alleviate some of the cost of medical and dental education and help address ongoing health care provider shortages to ensure patients can access the care they need.

Thank you for your efforts and leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you to ensure enactment of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Patricia L. Turner, MD, MBA, FACS  
Executive Director & CEO

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