



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

1090 Vermont Ave, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005-4949 | ph (202) 414-0140 | (800) 962-9008 | www.osteopathio.org

July 23, 2014

The Honorable Matt Salmon
U.S. House of Representatives
2349 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jared Polis
U.S. House of Representatives
1433 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Salmon and Polis:

On behalf of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the more than 104,000 osteopathic physicians and osteopathic medical students we represent, thank you for introducing the “Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act” (H.R. 3136). This bill would increase access and affordability in higher education by allowing institutions the flexibility to provide a degree that is based on a student’s knowledge and skills instead of seat time.

Recognizing an impending storm of quality, access, and workforce shortage issues in our nation’s healthcare system, in 2011 the AOA and the Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) formed the Blue Ribbon Commission for the Advancement of Osteopathic Medicine to identify unique opportunities for the osteopathic profession to improve the health of the U.S. population in the 21st century. The Commission developed an innovative new model in its report last year in which osteopathic physicians would be trained through a competency-based curriculum consisting of a continuous, longitudinal educational experience that is based on patient-centered care encompassing population health as a means of improving the overall quality and efficiency of care. Ensuring the competency of the graduate under this model would be paramount, whether it takes five years or eight years to complete the program; but having a continuous process instead of separate undergraduate and graduate systems would enhance the efficiency of the experience and reduce the time to completion for many students.

Your legislation provides flexibility to allow institutions such as colleges of osteopathic medicine to test these and other innovative models to meet the challenges of our future physician workforce. Again, thank you for introducing this important legislation. The AOA and our members stand ready to assist you in securing its enactment into law.

Sincerely,

Robert S. Juhasz, DO
President