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January 29, 2013

The Honorable Joseph Pitts
U.S. House of Representatives
420 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Pitts:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing in support of H.R. 297, the "Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act of 2013," which would reauthorize federal funding to support graduate medical education (GME) for freestanding children's hospitals.

Leading authorities agree that by 2025 the United States will face a shortage of physicians to meet the needs of our U.S. population. While demand for access to physician services will be increasing, physician shortfalls up to 130,000 across all specialties are predicted. Pediatric subspecialists who train at children's hospitals are among the more than 20 specialty groups already experiencing severe shortages.

Furthermore, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 capped the number of resident physicians each teaching hospital could claim for reimbursement under Medicare. While new U.S. allopathic and osteopathic medical schools are opening and many medical schools are expanding enrollments, core GME training programs are experiencing minimal growth due to limited funding.

Several important workforce programs, including Title VII and the Children's Hospital GME programs, rely on appropriations to fund the training of physicians. This important legislation would authorize the necessary funding to support this vital training program for pediatricians and pediatric subspecialists in children's hospitals.

Thank you for your support of residency programs that are critical for addressing our nation's physician workforce shortages. We look forward to working with you to ensure the U.S. House of Representatives' passage of this legislation and its consideration in the U.S. Senate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James L. Madara". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

James L. Madara, MD