



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*®

December 1, 2008

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Room SR-476
Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Clinton:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), representing 126,000 internal medicine physicians and medical students, I want to thank you for introducing the Health Professions and Primary Care Reinvestment Act, which reauthorizes Title VII of the Public Health Service Act. ACP is the largest medical specialty society and the second largest medical organization in the United States. The primary care programs under Title VII are the only federal programs that support education and training in primary care.

ACP is concerned about the decline in interest in careers in primary care specialties, including general internal medicine. The number of medical students and residents choosing to pursue careers in general internal medicine are declining at alarming rates. The hallmarks of primary care medicine--first contact care, continuity of care, comprehensive care, and coordinated care--are going to be increasingly necessary in caring for an aging population with growing incidence of chronic disease, and have proven to achieve improved outcomes and cost savings.

The Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry (TPCMD) program under Title VII, has not only contributed significantly to improving the quality of education and training in primary care specialties, but it has strengthened and diversified our nation's primary care workforce. By improving and expanding the TPCMD program, your legislation makes a critical investment in primary care, an essential component of our nation's health care system. Your legislation also encourages training in innovative models of care, such as the patient-centered medical home, that will better meet the needs of patients of the 21st Century. In addition, we are pleased that you have included provisions to encourage training in community settings and incentives for training and practicing in rural and underserved areas.

The Health Professions and Primary Care Reinvestment Act is a great step toward addressing the looming crisis in internal medicine and other primary care specialties. ACP commends you for your leadership in introducing this legislation. We look forward to working with you and lawmakers from both political parties in getting this legislation enacted into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey P. Harris".

Jeffrey P. Harris, MD, FACP
President