

August 25, 1999

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lowey:

The American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine (ACP-ASIM), representing over 115,000 internal medicine physicians and medical students, is pleased to express our support for H.R. 2771, the Medical Education Trust Fund Act of 1999. Among our members are tens of thousands of teaching physicians, residents, and administrators at medical schools and graduate medical education (GME) training sites throughout the nation.

We firmly believe that a system in which all payers, including self-insured plans, contribute their fair share of medical educational and training costs, as proposed in H.R. 2771, will best assure adequate and stable funding for this vital public good. Consequently, ACP-ASIM supports your proposal to establish five new trust funds to which all-payers would contribute for funding of medical schools and for both Medicare and Non-Medicare direct and indirect graduate medical education accounts. All health care payers, not just Medicare, depend on high-quality medical graduates, medical research, and technical advances from teaching facilities. All payers also derive value from this system and should share in the requisite investment in medical education.

Recognizing the complexities of funding undergraduate and graduate medical education and the substantial impact that any major restructuring of financing would have, we urge that adequate provision be established for an orderly transition to an all-payer system. Medicare must continue to provide stable funding as any new broader base of financing is developed and implemented. Thank you for sponsoring this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Alan R. Nelson, MD, FACP Associate Executive Vice President