



**House Appropriations Subcommittee on Article III
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Written Testimony of Gary Floyd, MD, President
Texas Medical Association
Feb. 21, 2023**

Chairman VanDeaver and members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Article III, in my testimony before you today as president of the Texas Medical Association I am representing more than 57,000 physicians and medical students who are members of our association.

I am a pediatrician from Corpus Christi. All our Texas physicians thank you, on behalf of our patients, for your commitment to educating and training physicians in our state.

We know when a physician completes medical school, and especially when he or she completes postgraduate residency training in the state, 80% are likely to remain in practice in Texas. We have been successful in growing our physician workforce, but as you know, Texas continues to lead the nation in population growth and it's not slowing down.

In the past year, Texas grew four times faster than the U.S. population rate, adding 471,000 people – half of whom moved into the state. Because of your efforts, Texas HAS achieved the target ratio of 1.1 first-year residency positions per medical school graduate, but that ratio will be hard to maintain. With the opening of The University of Texas at Tyler School of Medicine this year, seven new Texas medical schools will have opened since 2016. We project almost 300 more first-year residency positions will be needed by 2027.

Other physician pipeline programs also need your attention. These programs reinforce our belief that everyone, regardless of where they live, deserves the highest level of care.

- The **State Rural Training Track Grant program** was passed by the legislature in 2019, but it has never been funded. One million dollars would enable this program to prepare physicians for rural practice.
- The **Physician Education Loan Repayment Program** helps rural communities compete with our five major metro areas for physician recruitment. Unfortunately, in fiscal year 2021, this program was not able to take applications because it was fully subscribed. Please give attention to this program; its funding is flat in the base budget.
- The **Family Practice Residency Program** dates back to 1977. This program is important for primary care and rural access to care – there are more family medicine physicians in rural areas of our state than any other specialty. This program has seen many cuts and there are no additional dollars in the base budget. We urge you to consider an additional \$20 million to allow this program to make a difference once again.
- Finally, the **Joint Admission Medical Program** has not seen a funding increase, but it must expand to include the new public medical schools. We estimate an additional \$2 million is needed.

Thank you for the privilege of presenting testimony to you.