

September 20, 2023

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chairman
Senate Health Education Labor & Pensions
Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Marshall
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Primary Health and
Retirement Security
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders & Ranking Member Marshall:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing laboratory professionals and laboratories serving communities across the country, we express our strong support for Section 212 of the Bipartisan Primary Care and Health Workforce Act which the Committee will soon act upon. We thank you for your efforts to sustain the allied health workforce, including that of laboratory professionals, in the United States that is experiencing significant shortages.

Specifically, Section 212 would authorize funding for a workforce innovation grant program within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for community health centers and rural health clinics to carry out innovative, community-driven models to educate and train a wide range of allied health professionals, such as laboratory professionals. These grants would include partnerships with high schools, community colleges, and other entities. Priority will be given to models that train individuals from underserved and disadvantaged communities and demonstrate the potential to be replicated and scaled. In addition, the section amends existing law to authorize the Secretary to award grants and contracts to provide allied health training opportunities for high school students. This change would allow allied health training programs to inform high school students of allied health careers, including a range of skilled positions serving patients in clinical and public health laboratories, and available financial aid.

Representing nearly 1/3 of the health care workforce, allied health occupations have not received the focus and attention from the Congress that physicians and nurses have over the past several decades. Health high skill occupations, like laboratorians, are essential for the operation of our U.S. health and public health systems and significant shortages in these allied health occupations persist. This legislation represents an acknowledgement of the vital roles allied health professionals play in these systems.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We stand ready to assist you in enacting this legislation and addressing the health workforce needs of the American people. Please

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contact Patrick Cooney at patrick@federalgrp.com or at (202) 413-2629 if you have questions regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

America's Blood Centers

American Association of Pathologists' Assistant

American Clinical Laboratory Association

American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

American Society for Clinical Pathology

American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification

Association for Diagnostics and Laboratory Medicine

Association for Molecular Pathology

Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies

Association of Public Health Laboratories

Philippine Association of Medical Technologists-USA, Inc.

Wisconsin Diagnostic Laboratories