Whereas, Tax reform legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives on November 2, 2017 that includes provisions that could have a major adverse impact on physicians and patients; and

Whereas, One of the provisions would eliminate the tax deductibility of student loan payments; and

Whereas, This would adversely and disproportionately affect medical students, residents, and practicing physicians who on average graduate with $190,000 in student debt after completion of medical school, by further increasing the cost of those loans if their interest payments could no longer be deducted; and

Whereas, Another provision would eliminate the tax deductibility of high medical expenses, adversely and disproportionately affecting patients in need of extended skilled nursing, custodial, medical and hospital care, such as children with special needs and patients with Alzheimer’s disease, effectively raising their out-of-pocket costs and making care unaffordable for many of them; and

Whereas, These changes would take place without any time for those affected to alter their financial planning to take into account the increased cost of their student loans and/or medical expenses; and

Whereas, House Speaker Paul Ryan has said a bill with these provisions may be voted on by the House of Representatives by Thanksgiving; and

Whereas, The Senate may soon take up a similar bill; and

Whereas, The timing of congressional action requires an immediate and urgent policy response from our AMA to urge Congress to eliminate these adverse provisions from the legislation; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association immediately and strongly urge Congress to preserve the tax deductibility of student loan interest payments and high medical expenses in any tax reform legislation that will be considered and voted on by the House and Senate.

(Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Modest – between $1,000 - $5,000.
Received: 11/10/17