

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 306
(A-24)

Introduced by: Edmond Cabbabe, MD

Subject: Unmatched Graduating Physicians

Referred to: Reference Committee C

- 1 Whereas, the U.S. is expected to have an alarming and deeply concerning shortage of
2 physicians in primary and specialty care; and
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- 4 Whereas, the number of practicing physicians is decreasing due to burnout, retirement,
5 pursuing non-clinical practices, and other causes; and
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- 7 Whereas, the current number of medical students, residents, and fellows will not prevent such a
8 shortage; and
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- 10 Whereas, the U.S. Congress has repeatedly failed to provide funding to educate the necessary
11 number of physicians to provide needed care of our aging and expanding population; and
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- 13 Whereas, physician assistants (PAs), and advanced practice providers (APPs)/Nurse
14 Practitioners (NPs) have increasingly replaced licensed physicians in providing primary and
15 some specialty care due to geographic and economic shortage of physicians; and
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- 17 Whereas, many states have allowed non-physician extenders to practice medicine
18 independently rather than in collaboration with licensed physicians; and
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- 20 Whereas, a large number of physicians graduate from medical schools in the U.S. or abroad
21 take and pass USMLE part one and two, then apply for residency, but fail to get one of the
22 limited number of post graduate training spots in the U.S.; and
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- 24 Whereas, these graduating physicians spend six to eight years in undergraduate and graduate
25 studies before graduating, and some of them serve a year of internship required to graduate.
26 They spend huge sums of money to complete their studies, sit for and pass the rigorous USMLE
27 tests, spend thousands of dollars on their applications for the matching programs and
28 interviews; and
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- 30 Whereas, these unfortunate physicians face the very hard reality of a sudden irreversible
31 interruption of their careers, including, but not limited to large outstanding debts they cannot
32 repay, temporary to permanent interruption of their education, and the threat of never being able
33 to care for patients, while others who are less qualified, less educated, and less financially
34 burdened, such as APPs/NPs can practice medicine with or without collaborating with a
35 licensed physician; and
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- 37 Whereas, in 2014, Missouri passed a law allowing these unfortunate graduating physicians to
38 obtain a license called Assistant Physician (AP) which allow these physicians without residency
39 to work in underserved areas in primary care, and only in collaboration with a licensed Missouri
40 physician; and

1 Whereas, many other states have passed similar or much less restrictive laws, under different
2 titles and processes such as Graduate Physician, Associate Physician, etc., some of them
3 allowing this group to gradually practice independently without a residency; and
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5 Whereas, the number of these unfortunate graduating physicians has grown by the thousands
6 each year, yet Congress did not provide the needed funding to create enough residency slots to
7 train these physicians who would partially solve the expected shortages; and
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9 Whereas, many of these graduating physicians, after practicing in collaboration with licensed
10 physicians, acquiring additional skills and experience, were able to match into a residency
11 program; therefore be it
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13 RESOLVED, that our American Medical Association Board of Trustees study the role these
14 unmatched physicians can play in providing care to our patients, their impact of lessening the
15 impact of physician shortages, and provide recommendations on how to enroll these graduating
16 physicians with a uniform title, privileges, geographic restrictions, and collaboration choices, and
17 report to the House of Delegates at the next Interim meeting. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Minimal - less than \$1,000

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DRAFT