March 21, 2016

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Under bipartisan leadership, Congress has worked to provide support for the training of pediatric medical residents through the Children’s Hospitals Graduate Medical Education Program (CHGME). While we recognize that Congress faces many difficult funding decisions again this year, we respectfully urge you to provide CHGME with the FY 2017 funding support necessary to maintain the gains made under the program over the last decade.

The CHGME program represents the most important federal investment in strengthening the pediatric healthcare workforce and has been a major success. CHGME was created by Congress in 1999 to address the gap in federal support for pediatric training, and has increased the number of pediatric providers, addressed critical shortages in pediatric specialty care and improved children’s access to health care. Today, the children’s hospitals that receive CHGME, less than one percent of all hospitals, train 49 percent of all pediatric residents. The program ensures that general pediatricians and pediatric specialists are trained to care for children in communities across the country, covering everything from well-child visits to the most complex cardiac surgeries. CHGME trains doctors who go on to care for children living in cities, rural communities, suburbs and everywhere in between.

Strong continued funding is essential to maintaining the pediatric workforce pipeline. While much has been achieved, much remains to be done as serious shortages in many pediatric specialties persist, often resulting in long wait times for care. Now is the time to take a step forwards in pediatric medicine.

We recognize that Congress has a responsibility to carefully consider the nation’s spending priorities. CHGME is a critical investment in our country’s medical future to ensure that children will have continuing access to the care they need across provider settings. We thank
you for the Subcommittee’s past leadership in investing in the healthcare of all children and urge continued support for the CHGME program in FY 2017.

Respectfully,

Michael C. Burgess, M.D.

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.

Steve Chabot

Eliot L. Engel

Sam Graves

Joe Courtney

Louise M. Slaughter

Alcee L. Hastings

Lois Capps

Dave Reichert

Jason Chaffetz

Mark Takano

Jim Costa

Yvette D. Clarke

Niki Tsongas

Mark Takai