

RESOLUTION

Subject: Physician Workforce Shortage

Submitted by: KMA Board of Trustees

Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, physician shortages persist across the country; and

WHEREAS, state-based data shows that Kentucky is not immune from physician shortages as a recent report by the Kentucky Office of Rural Health finds that the number of physicians in Kentucky decreased by 590 between 2019 and 2022; and

WHEREAS, the shortage of physicians creates patient access issues for Kentucky citizens, especially for populations in historically underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, the physician shortage also impacts the economies of local communities and the state as a whole; and

WHEREAS, state policymakers increasingly aim to enhance patient access and alleviate workforce shortages by revising licensure requirements for physicians with international training or practice experience; and

WHEREAS, certain state-based proposals seek to circumvent specific requirements, such as U.S. or Canadian-based postgraduate training, which are intended to guarantee physicians possess the essential knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes essential for safe and competent patient care; and

WHEREAS, while some state-based proposals share similarities, distinctions exist that could result in different outcomes among states, potentially causing confusion among physicians, regulators, and patients; and

WHEREAS, medical boards and regulators' operationalization of proposed licensure requirement changes remain uncertain as best-practices for implementation and enforcement of such changes are unclear; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the Kentucky Medical Association request the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure to study whether allowing physicians who have completed training and/or practiced outside of the United States to forego completing a U.S. or Canadian-based accredited residency training program can help alleviate the state's physician workforce shortages without compromising patient safety and physician readiness for practice in the American health care system.