Protect Children’s Health:  
Fund Children’s Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME)

March 26, 2015

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  

Dear Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Murray, Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The Children’s Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program protects children’s access to high quality medical care by providing freestanding children’s hospitals with funding to support the training of pediatric providers. As groups dedicated to protecting and advancing the health of America’s children, we thank Senate and House appropriators for their longstanding bipartisan support of CHGME. Bipartisan legislation reauthorizing the program through FY 2018 was enacted in 2014.

Today, we urge you to protect children’s access to care and fully fund CHGME at its authorized level of $300 million in FY 2016. CHGME is an essential investment in our children’s health care – in promoting prevention and primary care, expanding health care for vulnerable and underserved children, and ensuring access to care for all children.

Since Congress created the program in 1999 to address the gap in federal support for pediatric training, CHGME has increased the number of pediatric providers, addressed critical shortages in pediatric specialty care and improved children’s access to care. Today, nearly half (49 percent) of all pediatric residents are trained by CHGME recipient hospitals. Overall, 51 percent of pediatric specialists are trained at CHGME hospitals, and in many specialties, such as pediatric surgery or critical care medicine, over 65 percent of physicians are trained at these children’s hospitals.

Continued funding is essential to maintaining the gains that have been achieved under CHGME in strengthening the pediatric workforce pipeline. While much has been achieved, much remains to be done, as serious shortages in many pediatric specialties persist. Now is not the time to take a step backwards in pediatric medicine.
We recognize that the current budget climate is extraordinarily challenging and that Congress has a responsibility to carefully consider the nation’s spending priorities. We respectfully request that the subcommittees continue its history of bipartisan support for CHGME and recommend $300 million in funding in FY 2016 for this vital program.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Dental Association
American Medical Association
American Pediatric Society
American Thoracic Society
America’s Essential Hospitals
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Pediatric Program Directors
Children’s Defense Fund
Children’s Hospital Association
Council of Pediatric Subspecialties
March of Dimes
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Hispanic Medical Association
Pediatric Policy Council
Society for Pediatric Research