



**Association of  
American Medical Colleges**  
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February 9, 2021

The Honorable Bobby Scott  
Chair  
House Committee on Education & Labor  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Education & Labor  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Foxx,

On behalf of the AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges), thank you for your continued efforts to support institutions of higher education during COVID-19. As our members continue to train physicians on the front lines of this pandemic, I write to urge you to ensure independent medical schools are appropriately included under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF).

The AAMC is a not-for-profit association dedicated to transforming health through medical education, health care, medical research, and community collaborations. Its members are all 155 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; more than 400 teaching hospitals and health systems, including Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and more than 70 academic societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC leads and serves America's medical schools and teaching hospitals and their more than 179,000 full-time faculty members, 92,000 medical students, 140,000 resident physicians, and 60,000 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the biomedical sciences.

The HEERF allocation formula established under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 116-260) weighs heavily the number of Pell Grant recipients at an institution. As medical schools continue to produce our frontline health care providers to fight COVID-19, it is important to make sure independent institutions are properly supported to help defray additional costs during the pandemic. Since graduate students are not eligible for Pell Grants, independent medical schools inherently receive less funding for our learners, including former Pell Grant recipients and other economically disadvantaged students.

Medical schools rely on the HEERF to help support medical students' emergency costs resulting from COVID-19. Adjusting the formula to better represent graduate and professional students would help with any potential struggles they may face due to the pandemic. As the Committee considers further COVID-19 supplemental relief legislation, I urge you to ensure the HEERF formula appropriately considers disadvantaged medical students.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or Brett Roude ([broude@aamc.org](mailto:broude@aamc.org)).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Fisher".

Karen Fisher, JD  
Chief Public Policy Officer