



March 4, 2026

Members of the Joint Budget Committee  
Legislative Services Building  
200 E. 14th Ave, #300  
Denver, Colorado

### **Don't Take Away Our Future: Stop IME Cuts**

Training to be a doctor is as challenging as it is rewarding. It requires years of medical school, countless early mornings and late nights, and an unflinching dedication to our patients and communities. Working in medicine teaches you that, like so many other things in life, what you put into something often determines what you get out of it.

Just as we make significant investments of time, energy, money, and emotion into our future as doctors, we humbly ask that lawmakers invest in the future of health care in Colorado. As medical students and residents, we are part of that future, and we are deeply concerned about proposals to cut indirect medical education (IME) funding in our state.

For doctors, hands-on training in a clinical setting is absolutely crucial. The expertise we are developing through residency and fellowship programs at Colorado hospitals is irreplaceable. No book or lecture or simulation can teach us the same valuable skills we learn at the bedside.

Cuts to IME funding means fewer training slots, which means fewer doctors in Colorado. That will shut scores of Coloradans out of the care they need. In a health care environment where communities compete to attract and retain the doctors and specialists they need, Colorado cannot afford to retreat from its reputation as a destination state for aspiring physicians.

Word travels fast in the medical community. Once the pipeline is shut off, even for a year or two, the reputational consequences among physicians-in-training will be swift. If Colorado ceases to be a promising state for a medical career, college graduates will find other states to pursue their dreams of becoming a doctor. It could take a decade for Colorado's medical education reputation to recover.

Many of us seek out residencies in the same states we hope to live and practice in. Nationally, nearly 56% of residents are practicing where they completed their residency training.<sup>1</sup> In Colorado, 42.3% of physicians who trained here still practice here.<sup>3</sup>

The closer we can get to the specific patients and communities we hope to care for, the more we can learn. By getting to know the people we will work alongside, we build stronger care teams ready to

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<sup>1</sup> AAMC Report on Residents (<https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/students-residents/data/report-residents/2025/executive-summary>)

address a wider range of health issues. We should not harm what is working for our state.

We understand that the state budget is in a difficult place, but cutting funding for the 1,800 residents a year whose training in Colorado is supported by IME funding is the wrong answer.<sup>2</sup> And it would be devastating for the hundreds of residency positions in Colorado that do not receive direct medical education support.<sup>3</sup>

In these difficult times, the best solutions consider both the short- and long-term effects. The long-term effects of IME cuts are clear: fewer doctors, decreased access to care, and a state that falls behind. The future of health care in Colorado depends on our willingness to prioritize the next generation of health care providers so that the workforce pipeline remains strong. Please protect our futures, and the futures of all Coloradans, and reject cuts to IME funding.

Sincerely,

Cinthia Aguilar  
Denver, 80022

Sarah Alfieri  
Denver, 80205

Meredith Alston  
Thornton, 80692

Emily Ambler  
Aurora, 80019

Stephanie Amend  
Morrison, 80465

Andrew Amend  
Morrison, 80465

Nichole Anderez  
Aurora, 80010

Trevor Anderson  
Grand Junction, 81506

Marsha Anderson  
Centennial, 80122

Quentin Anson  
Lone Tree, 80124

Nina Ball  
Centennial, 80121

Allan Barraza  
Denver, 80203

Madison Bassett  
Pueblo, 81001

Sydney Behrmann  
Aurora, 80045

Yanitza Berrios  
Denver, 80218

Laura Bertani  
Fort Collins, 80524

Shreya Bhattacharya  
Denver, 80218

Jamie Bish  
Fort Collins, 80524

Davis Blanton  
Fort Collins, 80524

Jessica Bloom  
Denver, 80223

Abria Bonner  
Denver, 80207

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<sup>2</sup> ACGME Data Resource Book 2024-25 ([https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pfassets/publicationsbooks/2024-2025\\_acgme\\_databook\\_document.pdf](https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pfassets/publicationsbooks/2024-2025_acgme_databook_document.pdf))

<sup>3</sup> AAMC GME Fact Sheet, Colorado (<https://www.aamc.org/media/65806/download>)



Nick Brady  
Denver, 80203  
Samantha Brener  
Denver, 80220  
Emily Bressan  
Westminster, 80234  
Alia Broman  
Denver, 80220  
Jennifer Brown  
Denver, 80401  
Charles Brown  
Golden, 80401  
Jennifer Brown  
Golden, 80401  
Griffin Bryant  
Denver, 80218  
Alice Burgess  
Denver, 80206  
Erika Burke  
Denver, 80207  
Hannah Burroff  
Denver, 80220  
Kari Byrnes  
Denver, 80203  
Alana Campbell  
Denver, 80220  
Julia Canty  
Denver, 80238  
Codie Carlton  
Littleton, 80127  
Kevin Carney  
Denver, 80212  
Dong Hee Chang  
Englewood, 80113  
Jessica Chen  
Westminster, 80005  
Lucas Choy  
Broomfield, 80023  
Scott Christenson  
Denver, 80203  
Justin Cillay  
Denver, 80212  
Conner Clark  
Denver, 80231  
Mitchell Clingo

Centennial, 80015  
Alyssa Cole  
Denver, 80204  
Caryn Coleman  
Denver, 80211  
Alexandra Collell  
Aurora, 80045  
Grace Cook  
Pueblo, 81004  
Joshua Cooper  
Arvada, 80003  
Nikhil Crain  
Denver, 80206  
Leah Creamer  
Denver, 80220  
Nathan Culberson  
Pueblo, 81001  
Angela Czaja  
Aurora, 80111  
Hannah Dabagian  
Denver, 80218  
Isabelle Dagher  
Aurora, 80010  
Lisa Dahl  
Denver, 80211  
Nicholas D'Ambrosio  
Denver, 80212  
Daniyal Dar  
Grand Junction, 81505  
Michael DaRosa  
Denver, 80206  
Matt Davis  
Denver, 80207  
Isabelle De Castro  
Pueblo, 81004  
Regan Denny  
Denver, 80206  
Mary Dion  
Arvada, 80007  
Kylie Dominick  
Fort Collins, 80521  
Jesus Dorado  
Denver, 80110  
Madeleine Duncan  
Denver, 80238

Jenna Ehn  
Denver, 80238  
Sulafa Elhassan  
Colorado, 81505  
Michael Erlandson  
Englewood, 80111  
Emily Ernest  
Denver, 80238  
Jason Espinoza  
Denver, 80238  
Megan Fessenden  
Westminster, 80021  
Taber Fisher  
Fort Collins, 80528  
Sophie Fleuret  
Denver, 80203  
Ryan Flint  
Denver, 80207  
Sarah Flores  
Denver, 80239  
Matthew Foman  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Curtis Rashaan Ford  
Centennial, 80016  
Joseph Freeze  
Englewood, 80114  
Jessica Frelinger  
Denver, 80220  
Rachel Gaffney  
Denver, 80202  
Katie Ganser  
Golden, 80401  
Madeleine Garcia  
Denver, 80205  
Megan Gause  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Mason Gedlaman  
Denver, 80014  
Alexandra George  
Denver, 80206  
Christine Giesing  
Denver, 80218  
Sarena Gill, MD  
Denver, 80210  
Alex Gillotte

Denver, 80238  
Daniela Godoy  
Denver, 80238  
Ryan Good  
Denver, 80231  
Savanna Gornisiewicz  
Aurora, 80045  
Hannah Graham  
Fort Collins, 80521  
Lauren Griffin  
Northglenn, 80234  
Jennifer Griffith  
Centennial, 80111  
Elizabeth Groff  
Broomfield, 80023  
Stacey Gundry  
Commerce City, 80022  
Andrew Hahn  
Fort Collins, 80525  
Lisa Hamilton  
Pueblo, 81004  
Megan Hawthorn  
Denver, 80238  
McKenzi Heide  
Denver, 80218  
Adeiye Henry  
Denver, 80238  
Ashley Herrera  
Denver, 80210  
Mary Hicks  
Highlands Ranch, 80126  
Greg Hicks  
Highlands Ranch, 80126  
Allison Hicks  
Denver, 80238  
Katherine Higgins  
Denver, 80216  
Erika Hinricher  
Lakewood, 80228  
Sarah Holdren  
Denver, 80205  
Kayla Holland  
Denver, 80229  
Andrea Holt  
Fort Collins, 80524

Conor Honan  
Denver, 80207  
Christopher Houser  
Castle Rock, 80104  
Lorel Huber  
Aurora, 80010  
Moody Copper Inabangan  
Parker, 80134  
Ryan Jaarsma  
Pueblo, 81004  
Brian Jackson  
Denver, 80220  
Anna Janas  
Golden, 80403  
Melissa Jimenez  
Westminster, 80023  
Jason Johnson  
Arvada, 80007  
Eleanor Johnston  
Denver, 80211  
Lynne Jones  
Colorado Springs, 80919  
James Kaferly  
Denver, 80230  
Kathryn Kalata  
Denver, 80230  
Joshua Kalter  
Denver, 80206  
Eric Keahey  
Broomfield, 80023  
Meghan Keane  
Denver, 80218  
Sophia Khan  
Denver, 80207  
Sophia Khan  
Denver, 80207  
Heather Kilpatrick  
Denver, 80204  
Connor King  
Arvada, 80002  
Onna Klooster  
Arvada, 80003  
Erin Kneeskern  
Golden, 80401  
Elin Kondrad

Denver, 80220  
Maxwell Koszowski  
Denver, 80230  
Julia Kozlowski  
Denver, 80238  
Alyssa Krueger  
Fort Collins, 80525  
Sandra Kuester  
Arvada, 80004  
Claudia Kunrath  
Denver, 80220  
Alexander Lalisian  
Denver, 80220  
Emily Lampe  
Denver, 80210  
Megan Lantz  
Parker, 80138  
Janet Lavrixh  
Lone Tree, 80124  
Lauren Le  
Denver, 80212  
Daniel Lee  
Pueblo, 81004  
Sophia Lee  
Denver, 80205  
Sai Prasanna Lekkala  
Pueblo, 81008  
Meredith Levy  
Denver, 80224  
Andrea Lewis  
Pueblo, 81006  
Jennifer Libra  
Denver, 80238  
Sarah Liegl  
Denver, 80238  
Mao Lin  
Northglenn, 80241  
Emillia Lloyd  
Pueblo, 81008  
Laura Lockwood  
Denver, 80238  
Ryan Lofthouse  
Pueblo, 81001  
Michele Loi  
Denver, 80238

Amanda Lokke  
Denver, 80210  
Sam Longfellow  
Pueblo, 81005  
Lindsey Longfellow  
Pueblo, 81005  
Rebecca Loucks-Schultz  
Denver, 80238  
Matt Ludemann  
Westminster, 80023  
Kimberly Lugo  
Denver, 80208  
Huy Ly  
Denver, 80211  
Aline Maddux  
Denver, 80207  
Andrew Maddux  
Denver, 80207  
Blake Martin  
Denver, 80206  
Madison Martz  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Danielle Mashburn  
Aurora, 80045  
Liana Mathias  
Denver, 80204  
Madison Mau  
Denver, 80205  
Kimberlyn McClendon  
Denver, 80238  
Kayla McConnaha  
Fort Collins, 80528  
Elizabeth McGinn  
Denver, 80207  
Lauren McVeigh  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Laura McWhirter  
Denver, 80238  
Dylan Mechling  
Grand Junction, 81505  
Morgan Mestas  
Thornton, 80241  
Katie Metzler  
Grand Junction, 81501  
Monet Miller

Thornton, 80023  
Richard Miranda, MD  
Centennial, 80112  
Celia Mizelle  
Denver, 80205  
Claire Moen  
Greenwood Village, 80111  
Luke Mollnow  
Denver, 800016  
Sherry Morgan  
Arvada, 80007  
Don Morgan  
Arvada, 80007  
Erin Morine  
Westminster, 80023  
Tanner Morris  
Westminster, 80602  
Tippavon Morrow  
Fort Collins, 80528  
Michael Morton  
Denver, 80218  
Kelly Morton  
Denver, 80218  
Sydne Muratore  
Denver, 80220  
Kimberly Myers  
Westminster, 80023  
Ranjini Nagaraj  
Denver, 80204  
Alexanna Nathan  
Denver, 80220  
Corinna Nelson  
Golden, 80401  
Maria Niccum  
Englewood, 80111  
Emily Nimri  
Denver, 80223  
Marissa Nolan  
Denver, 80206  
Eva Nozik  
Aurora, 80045  
Alexandra Obremsky  
Aurora, 80045  
Genevieve Ochs  
Lafayette, 80026

Megan OLeary  
Denver, 80218  
Sonja OLeary  
Denver, 80238  
Lukas Ommen  
Grand Junction, 81501  
Stephen O'Neill  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Amanda Ortiz  
Denver, 80207  
Megan Parfait  
Denver, 80206  
Alexis Parliament  
Fountain, 80817  
Anne Paterson  
Denver, 80207  
Summer Pellechio  
Denver, 80211  
Lauren Pennington  
Denver, 80212  
Jessica Persson  
Denver, 80205  
Jamie Pfahl  
Fruita, 81521  
Kasey Pickard  
Centennial, 80111  
Penny Poeschl  
Westminster, 80023  
Brenna Polsinelli  
Denver, 80205  
Kristin Powell-Sellers  
Thornton, 80241  
Sweta Pradhan  
Denver, 80230  
Luke Proctor  
Denver, 80018  
Katelyn Pruett  
Arvada, 80004  
Emily Rand  
Denver, 80211  
Anna Rasmussen  
Grand Junction, 81503  
Marissa Rayner  
Denver, 80203  
Rachel Reed

Thornton, 80229  
Sheyla Richards  
Aurora, 80045  
Leslie Ridall  
Denver, 80238  
Sarah-Ashley Robbins  
Denver, 80211  
Collin Roberts  
Fort Collins, 80525  
Danielle Roberts  
Denver, 80210  
Kristine Rodrigues  
Denver, 80212  
Savanna Rosenbaum  
Commerce City, 80022  
Lisa Rothlein-Naron  
Highlands Ranch, 80130  
Michael Rudolph  
Denver, 80205  
Anna Ruff, MD  
Pueblo, 81004  
Marcus Ruscio  
Brighton, 80601  
Katie Rutledge  
Fort Collins, 80526  
Chris Ruzas  
Denver, 80237  
Maria-Elise Sanchez  
Denver, 80207  
Rachel Sanders  
Denver, 80247  
Stephanie Sandhu  
Denver, 80238  
Samantha Santora-Dedear  
Denver, 80207  
Celina Sarangi  
Westminster, 80023  
Natalie Schmidt  
Denver, 80206  
Colleen Schneider  
Denver, 80249  
Rick Schoppe  
Aurora, 80011  
Gabby Segal  
Lakewood, 80226

Kathryn Seitz  
Denver, 80207  
Dane Sessions  
Denver, 80238  
Ethan Sewell  
Denver, 80209  
Sara Shankman  
Denver, 80205  
Taryn Shea  
Commerce City, 80022  
Tsion Shiferaw  
Denver, 80206  
Kumari Simran  
Pueblo, 81003  
Elizabeth Skelly  
Pueblo, 81004  
Brady Slater, MD  
Denver, 80238  
Benjamin Smith  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Haleigh Sockwell  
Fort Collins, 80526  
Muhammad Sohaib  
Pueblo, 81003  
Hanan Sorensen  
Arvada, 80004  
Jaquelyn Speed  
Fruita, 81521  
Gregory Starsiak  
Lakewood, 80228  
Laura Stein  
Pueblo, 81006  
Alwin Steinmann  
Golden, 80403  
Erin Stenson  
Denver, 80238  
Megan Stodola  
Aurora, 80015  
Coleman Strosahl  
Grand Junction, 81504  
Morgan Sulger  
Denver, 80211  
Richard Sundermeyer  
Parker, 80134  
Jade Surface

Englewood, 80113  
Wendy Swenson  
Englewood, 80113  
Andrew Tannous  
Denver, 80211  
Tiffany Tesmer  
Thornton, 80241  
Michaela Thurston  
Grand Junction, 81507  
Michaela Trainer  
Thornton, 80241  
PJ Tran  
Denver, 80218  
Satya Raj Trikha  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Abby Trinh  
Pueblo, 81008  
William Tsai  
Denver, 80210  
Kevin Vance  
Westminster, 80234  
Sarah Vangi  
Arvada, 80004  
Julie Venci  
Devern, 80212  
Joseph Viviano  
Pueblo, 81004  
Christine Vohwinkel  
Denver, 80205  
Dylan Waddill  
Pueblo West, 81007  
Katie Walsh  
Denver, 80228  
Brandon Webb  
Aurora, 80012  
Annalea White  
Pueblo, 81007  
Jordan Wiesler  
Denver, 80220  
Rebekah Withers  
Denver, 80203  
Jordan Wlodarczyk  
Denver, 80218  
Karin Wollschlaeger  
Denver, 80206

Westin Wong  
Aurora, 80011  
Jessica Wongward  
Denver, 80211  
Janell Wozniak  
Fort Collins, 80524  
Jessica Wu  
Denver, 80016  
Randy Xun  
Westminster, 80031  
Adam Yazbeck  
Centennial, 80112  
Joshua Zane  
Denver, 80203  
Chen Zeigerson  
Fort Collins, 80521  
Shanta Zimmer  
Denver, 80238