



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



THE PLASTIC SURGERY  
FOUNDATION™

Executive Office

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April 14, 2015

The Honorable Kathy Castor  
205 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: H.R.1117 – Creating Access to Residency Education Act of 2015**

Dear Representative Castor:

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) is the largest association of plastic surgeons in the world, representing more than 7,000 members and 94 percent of all American Board of Plastic Surgery board-certified plastic surgeons in the United States. Plastic surgeons provide highly skilled surgical services that improve both the functional capacity and quality of life of patients. These services include the treatment of congenital deformities, burn injuries, traumatic injuries, hand conditions, and cancer. ASPS promotes the highest quality patient care, professional and ethical standards, and supports the education, research, and public service activities of plastic surgeons. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on our support for your legislation, H.R.1117, the *Creating Access to Residency Education Act of 2015*.

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons strongly supports the expansion of funding to improve physician training. The number of Medicare funded GME positions in the United States has remained capped since the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. Still, there has never been such a need to increase the number of residency slots available, as an unprecedented number of Americans have access to health services through the Affordable Care Act, as more than 100,000 seniors become eligible for Medicare every day, and as the number of American medical school graduates is poised to reach record numbers.

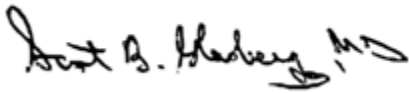
According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, an overall shortage of 91,000 physicians will occur by 2020. By 2025, the shortage is expected to reach 130,000. While there is undoubtedly serious concern for access to primary care providers, one-half of this shortage will come from specialty physicians. We appreciate your inclusion of specialty medicine within your legislation, as the field of plastic and reconstructive surgery also has areas of need.

A recent American College of Surgeons Health Policy Research Institute study shows that there is an average of two plastic surgeons per 100,000 individuals in the United States. Plastic surgeons play an integral role in the treatment of breast cancer, which is the second leading cause of death in women. It is estimated that over 230,000 new cases will be identified each year. Several studies have found a direct correlation between the rates of women in a given geographic

location who receive breast reconstruction and the number of plastic surgeons practicing in that location. The Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 mandates that reconstructive procedures be offered, yet shortages of qualified surgeons have and will continue to limit availability and proper care for the patient.

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the *Creating Access to Residency Education Act of 2015* and looks forward to working with you to advance this legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Hermes, Senior Manager of Advocacy and Government Affairs, with any questions – [Phermes@plasticsurgery.org](mailto:Phermes@plasticsurgery.org) or (847) 228-3331.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scot B. Glasberg, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Scot B. Glasberg, MD  
President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons