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Representatives Miller, Veasey, Graves and Carter:

On behalf of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the national medical specialty society representing over 38,900 psychiatrists, I write to express our strong support for the Community Training, Education, and Access for Medical Students (TEAMS) Act.

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The United States is confronting a critical shortage of mental health professionals. More than 150 million Americans currently live in designated mental health professional shortage areas, and projections from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) suggest that the need for psychiatrists will only grow in coming years. This shortage is especially acute in rural and underserved regions, where patients often wait weeks for care, or go without it altogether.

Expanding access to high-quality clinical training is one of the most effective strategies to strengthen the psychiatric workforce. Ensuring that medical students and residents gain hands-on experience in community-based, non-hospital settings, where psychiatric needs are often greatest, helps prepare the next generation of clinicians to serve in areas with the highest unmet demand. Your legislation would support this objective by fostering partnerships between medical schools and community health centers, rural clinics, and other high-need clinical sites, laying the groundwork for a more distributed and sustainable mental health workforce. Importantly, research shows that medical students who complete rotations in these settings are significantly more likely to return to practice in similar communities after graduation. The Community TEAMS Act will not only enhance medical education but also yield lasting improvements in access to psychiatric care in the areas that need it most.

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We applaud your bipartisan leadership in introducing this forward-looking legislation. The APA stands ready to work with you to build a more robust physician workforce to ensure that mental health care is accessible to all who need it.

Sincerely,



MD, MBA, FAPA

**Marketa M. Wills, MD, MBA, FAPA**

CEO & Medical Director, American Psychiatric Association