May 15, 2018

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Graham,

On behalf of the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association, I urge you to preserve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. PSLF allows borrowers who work full-time at public service jobs — while making on-time payments on their student loans — to earn forgiveness after ten years. We have seen firsthand the program’s positive effects through the amazing employees at South Carolina’s 22 community health centers (CHCs), which our Association represents.

PSLF makes it financially feasible for talented individuals to commit to careers in medically underserved areas. We have seen many qualified students follow their hearts to serve communities that need them versus taking a more lucrative position in order to pay back loans. Richetta Deas, ANP-C, is one such individual. As she progressed through her education, she quickly noted how many communities lacked access to quality health care. Richetta is a Licensed Practical Nurse at Fetter Health Care Network in the Trident area.

Diania Bunting, LPN, MHS, the surgical coordinator at Beaufort Jasper Hampton Comprehensive Health Services, has a similar story. The mother of four children, she was finally able to realize her dream of earning a college degree. An unfortunate byproduct of this realized goal was $92,000 in loan debt. Through PSLF, she can focus on delivering quality care in her community, where she is needed, instead of worrying about making loan payments well into her eventual retirement.

PSLF success stories like Richetta’s and Diania’s abound at community health centers throughout the country. PSLF is a powerful recruitment tool for community health center providers and office staff. Without programs like PSLF, CHCs would struggle to fight what is an already uphill battle to meet workforce needs. For example, at Family Health Centers in Orangeburg, there are 12 employees alone who benefit from PSLF.

We ask you to help students continue this path of public service and the significant contributions to our local communities as well as the nation by preserving PSLF as it exists today.

If we can be of further assistance to you and your staff in terms of additional information or to answer any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us.
Sincerely,

Lathran J. Woodard  
CEO, South Carolina Primary Health Care Association
May 15, 2018

The Honorable Tim Scott
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Scott,

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