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NEVADA

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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2805

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The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 120F  
Washington, D. C. 20201

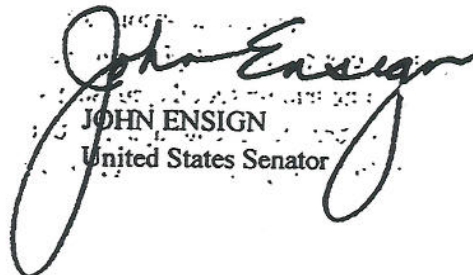
Dear Secretary Sebelius:

I am writing to support the grant application of the University of Nevada School of Medicine (UNSOM) for the *Primary Care Residency Expansion* grant, under the Affordable Care Act (HRSA-10-277). According to UNSOM, if funded, this grant would allow them to expand Nevada's much needed primary care training program.

Nevada continues to have an extremely low number of physicians per capita when compared to the national average and to neighboring states in the western region. It should be noted that this has been an on-going challenge for my state, as Nevada's poor national and regional rankings have not changed appreciably since 1990. In addition, our state's physician workforce is characterized by the persistence of significant disparities across our various regions- in general, the number of physicians per capita is lower in rural areas versus urban areas of the state, and the number of physicians per capita is lower in urban areas of southern Nevada versus urban areas of northwestern Nevada. Consequently, we have many communities that are at a significant disadvantage in their ability to recruit and retain primary care physicians. However, working in Nevada's favor, is the fact that a majority of physicians completing UNSOM residency and fellowship programs remain in Nevada to practice medicine. Therefore, any increase in the number of primary care residency positions within my state has the potential of significantly alleviating the growing challenges Nevada continues to face with providing access to much-needed health care.

Therefore, I ask you to give the University of Nevada School of Medicine's submission every possible consideration, and I thank you for your careful review of this application.

Sincerely,

  
JOHN ENSIGN  
United States Senator

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**THINK  
PROGRESS**