



SaveGME Action Week August 24th-28th

Dear Medical Student,

Welcome to the third **SaveGME Action Week!** This is YOUR opportunity to affect change in the future of medicine. This is your chance to ensure that YOU have a residency spot. Last year **440 U.S. Seniors** in M.D. programs did not find a residency spot, and that needs to change! Please join your colleagues and friends as we seek to make Graduate Medical Education (GME) the most important topic that our legislators hear about this week. This action kit will **highlight the special events** for the week and will provide you with all of the information you need to make your voice heard. I can't wait to see the results!

Part 1: The Visit

Face-to-face meetings with your legislators are the **most effective way** to make sure that your points are remembered. We highly encourage you to meet with your legislators during SaveGME Action Week. Your school's AMA section president has already received information about coordinating a visit. Please speak to your section president about a meeting first. See the attached **Visit Information section (p. 4)** for more information.

Part 2: The #SaveGME Challenge

This year we are excited to introduce the #SaveGME Challenge. Each School Section that **participates in a visit to a legislator will qualify to win \$500** toward an AMA event of for your school. For more information see the Contest Information section (p. 6).

Part 3: Email Letters and Phone Calls

We also encourage you to make **phone calls with our hotline 800-833-6354** or send **letters** to your lawmakers. These are the second best way to make your voice heard! **Send a personal letter** or visit SaveGME.org "Actions" to send a template letter to your specific lawmakers. It's as easy as entering a zip code and signing your name. Each letter you send matters; the more we send the more attention we will receive!

Part 4: Social Media

Right after you finish reading this letter, go to your **Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram** accounts and change your profile picture to the logo attached to this email. The **Social Media section (p. 6)** of this packet has a list of great tweets and posts that you can use. Post the **SaveGME graphic** and use **#SaveGME** every time! You can also tweet to your lawmakers directly using their personal handles (lists attached) to create a personal connection.

Part 5: Share Your Story

To close out the week we would like you to **visit SaveGME.org to share your story** on our wall. We want your story to be a part of a campaign that continues until change is accomplished. Just post a few words, maybe a photo, and be a part of the impact students can make when we work together.

Thank You for being a part of this important effort! The **official schedule** for the week is **below**.

Your Enthusiastic GRAF,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alicia Smith", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

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#SAVEGME



2015 Medical Student Action Kit

Visit Information

Step 1: Setting up Visit

Please speak to your section leaders **prior** to setting up a visit. They have previously received this information and may have already scheduled a visit that you can participate in.

Determine your elected officials and office locations by entering in your zip code in the “Find Officials” box on <http://savegme.org/take-action>. Click on the official you would like to visit, scroll down to their staff to find the **District Office** phone number or official email address. **Email or Call to schedule** a meeting using the attached phone call script. If you have trouble scheduling a meeting or would like assistance with the logistics, please do not hesitate to **email me** at alicia.smith@ama-assn.org.

When you schedule a meeting, cc: savegmeweek@ama-assn.org or email us so that we can keep track of who is scheduling and attending the meetings to avoid duplication of our efforts.

Step 2: Preparation for visit

Review the following documents prior to your visit, and make sure that all of the students attending the meeting have reviewed this information. Plan your pitch before your meeting to be most effective.

1. [How to make your voice heard by Congress](#)
2. [Video: How to make your voice heard by Congress](#)
3. Review “Ask” and “Talking Points” document on p. 9-10

Step 3: Submit letter

Go to SaveGME.org and **send a letter** to your Senators and Representatives prior to your meeting.

Step 4: Meeting and Picture

Meet with your member at their district office, make your “ask” very clear. After you meet, make sure that you get a **picture** with your legislator and their staff! *Do not discount the staff, they have influence.*



Step 5: Follow-Up

Submit the **picture** with the **attached entry form** to savegmeweek@ama-assn.org by **September 4th** to qualify to **win \$500** for your school in the #SaveGME Challenge!

Send a **thank you email** to the legislator/staffer that you met with, and attach your **picture** to the email. Then tell us how it went! Please fill out this [feedback form](#) for your visit.

Phone Call Script

- Could you please direct me to the member of your staff who handles scheduling for your district office?
(Wait for those directions, to be transferred, etc.)
- **(If speaking to a new person)** Hello, my name is [NAME] and I am calling on behalf of the medical students at [Medical School].
- Our school is joining a national movement called “Save GME Action Week” through the American Medical Association. We would like the opportunity to come and meet with [REP./SEN. NAME] during the **week of August 24th – 28th** to offer a local perspective and discuss how physician shortages and funding cuts to graduate medical education would affect patients and medical students at [MEDICAL SCHOOL].
- I am available to provide additional information that you may require and we are flexible to best accommodate [REP. /SEN. NAME] schedule, if that week does not work well.
- **(If the Rep./Sen. Is unavailable)** Would it be possible for us to meet with the staff member who handles topics related to healthcare?
- **(When you get a meeting date)** I appreciate your assistance in arranging this meeting. Is there an email address or phone number where I can contact you to confirm the meeting, as the date approaches?
Thank you very much; have a great day! 😊

Save GME Week Schedule – More to come with the *Medical Student Action Kit*

1. Monday (08/24)

- a. Begin the social media campaign by **changing your** Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram **profile pictures** to the Save GME graphic
- b. #SaveGME Challenge begins today
 - i. Requires a legislator visit with entry form and photo submission to savegmeweek@ama-assn.org

2. Tuesday (08/25)

- a. **Email** your legislators a personal letter or use the letter on SaveGME.org
 - i. Each student can send 3 emails per day!
- b. **At 8pm EST listen to** “CAREing for America” **a Radio Rounds Podcast** with Elizabeth Brown the Legislative Aid to Representative Kathy Castor (D-FL) on radiorounds.org
- c. Place a **phone call** via the Grassroots hotline: **800-833-6354**
 - i. Remember to review the talking points before your call

3. Wednesday (08/26)

- a. **Social Media** push – Post on all 3 platforms throughout the day!
 - i. **Tweet** a fact or your story with #SaveGME, or to a legislator specific handle (found via the “Find Officials” link at SaveGME.org)
 - ii. **Post** the SaveGME logo with a fact or your story on **Facebook** (school chapters post too) with the #SaveGME
 - iii. **Instagram** the SaveGME logo with a fact or your story and #SaveGME

4. Thursday (08/27)

- a. **Email** your legislators again via personal letter or SaveGME.org
 - i. Send 3 more, numbers do matter
- b. Place another **phone call** via the Grassroots hotline: **800-833-6354**

5. Friday (08/28)

- a. **Share your story** on SaveGME.org to finish out the week!
- b. Look for a feedback survey for the week in your email
- c. Visits throughout August and September can qualify for the #SaveGME Challenge! Remember to submit your photo and entry form **by October 9th** to be in the drawing.

#SaveGME Challenge Information

This year we are very excited to introduce the #Save GME Challenge, your school's opportunity to win a \$500 grant from the AMA-Medical Student Section!

How to Qualify:

Step 1: Visit a Legislator

- Schedule a visit with any of your legislators/staffers. You have 2 Senators and multiple Representatives to choose from. We do allow a school to have **multiple entries**.
- Visits will qualify if they are conducted in **August or September**. Your visit does NOT have to occur between August 24th and 26th.
- We do not want to duplicate our efforts, so multiple visits to the same legislator/staffer are discouraged and will not qualify.

Step 2: Complete the Entry Form

Complete the attached entry form for each of your visits.

Step 4: Attach a Photo

We need the photo of you with your legislator/staffer in order to verify your visit!

Step 5: Send and Wait

Submit your entry form and photo to savegmeweek@ama-assn.org by **Friday, October 4th**. We will have a random **drawing** for the winning section on Wednesday, October 14th.

Section Grant Details:

- \$500 toward the event of your AMA Section's choice
- Event examples include:
 - Recruitment Events
 - Legislative Action/Advocacy Events for your school/state
 - Service Projects
- Other event ideas can be requested and approved

GOOD LUCK!

Social Media Section

Step 1: Profile Picture

Change your Profile Picture to a Save GME graphic – on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.



Step 2: Wednesday is Social Media Day, but you can post all week long!

Create a post from the list of topics below or share your story about why you want to be a doctor, be sure to use #SaveGME and add the Save GME graphic. Post on all 3 platforms throughout the day.

In all of your outreach, please be professional so that our efforts aren't hindered. On our page you can search for your officials by zip code, choose one, and scroll down to find all their personal social media information.

Find your legislators' handles [here](#) by searching with your zip code.

Post/Tweet Examples (formatted to 140 characters for Twitter):

- Time and debt won't stop doctors from helping. Lacking a residency position does. www.SaveGME.org #SaveGME
- 37,000 medical residents provide care for our armed forces and #veterans. That's one amazing reason to #SaveGME. www.SaveGME.org
- Doctors with better training have better health outcomes. Help us #SaveGME and improve health across the US! <http://savegme.org/take-action/>
- We need to maintain critical training for the next generation of physicians. Take action to help #SaveGME: <http://savegme.org/take-action/>
- One reason why we need to #SaveGME: Residents at teaching hospitals help provide over 40% of hospital charity care. www.SaveGME.org

#SaveGME Shareable Graphic for you to Post or Tweet



Key Talking Points for Graduate Medical Education

- Explain what it takes to become a physician, and encourage our nation's best and brightest students to pursue medical careers – Becoming a physician requires a huge personal and financial commitment.
 - Upon graduation from an undergraduate institution, medical students then go through four years of medical school, which must then be supplemented by an additional residency training of 3-9 years in order to specialize and become licensed to practice. This totals 11-20 years of additional schooling past high school.
 - As of 2014, the average medical student debt is \$176,348, with 40% graduating with debt balances of more than \$200,000 according to the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC).
- Highlight the current physician shortage crisis. The United States is currently facing a severe shortage of doctors expected to get exponentially worse as the population continues to grow and our aging physician workforce moves towards retirement. **It is projected that by 2025, we will have up to 90,000 fewer physicians than the country needs.** While advances in technology and workflow will certainly make physicians more efficient over time, the need for more doctors is still larger than ever to take on the current challenges in the healthcare system.
- Physicians are key members of America's workforce who contribute substantial benefits to the economy. On average physicians contribute **\$1.6 trillion dollars** in total economic impact per year. A physician contributes an average of \$90,449 dollars in state and federal tax revenue per year. Additionally, each physician supports an average of **13 jobs** in a community.
- Although medical schools have expanded to accommodate more students, **there is an insufficient number of residency training positions available due to inadequate funding for Graduate Medical Education.** This means students may go all the way through medical school and have nowhere to complete their training after graduation. In 2015, this happened to over 400 US graduates of MD programs.
- Without adequately funded residency training positions, students – especially those from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds – may be discouraged from pursuing a medical career, which has a major impact on patient access to care.
- Teaching hospitals make up 6% of hospitals, but provide 40% of hospital charity care. This is possible because of residents who provide needed care for 1 in 5 hospitalized patients, including our seniors, veterans, and patients in underserved communities.
- The AMA supports legislation that would expand Graduate Medical Education positions to address the physician shortage:
 - Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015 (H.R. 2124/S. 1148) would create 15,000 new positions over 5 years.
 - Creating Access to Residency Education (CARE) Act of 2014 (H.R. 1117) to establish \$25 million in matching grants to fund new positions in states with low ratios of residents.
- **We are seeking additional champions in Congress as well as innovative solutions to help advance this critical issue which will dramatically affect access to healthcare for the entire country.**

What Are We Asking Of Congress?

Our “Ask” for Congress:

- 1.) We ask that current funding for Graduate Medical Education is maintained.
- 2.) We ask that you support legislation that increases residency positions, specifically:
 1. The Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015 (S. 1148/H.R. 2124)
 2. The Creating Access to Residency Education Act of 2015 (H.R. 1117)

The Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015 (S. 1148/H.R. 2124)

- Introduced by Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL)/Representative Joe Crowley (D-NY).
- Creates an additional 15,000 residency positions:
 - 3,000 new positions each year between fiscal years 2017-2021.
 - One third of the positions are designated for teaching hospitals that are currently over their residency position cap.
 - Half of the remaining positions must be filled by residents in shortage specialties.
- Directs the National Health Care Workforce Commission to submit a report to Congress identifying physician shortage specialties by January 1, 2018.
- Directs the Government Accountability Office to study strategies for increasing health professional workforce diversity.
- More information can be found in the AMA Wire story [“4 things students should know about the new GME bill”](#)

The Creating Access to Residency Education Act of 2015 (H.R. 1117)

- Introduced by Representatives Kathy Castor (D-FL) and Joe Heck, DO (R-NV).
- Establishes \$25 million in matching grants for States with a low ratio of medical residents relative to the general population (fewer than 25 residents per 100,000 individuals) to create new residency positions.
 - For primary care, Federal grants will fund two-thirds of the cost of each position.
 - For other specialties, Federal grants will fund half of the cost of each position.
- Creates partnerships between the Federal Government and key stakeholders such as: State, local government, community health center, local health department, and hospitals.
- Ensures stability of funding by requiring those receiving grants to enter multi-year contracts, recognizing that training programs can require up to seven years to complete.
- More information can be found in the AMA Wire story [“Bill would fund residency slots for underserved areas”](#)