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The Honorable John Joyce, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
152 Cannon House Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Deborah Ross
U.S. House of Representatives
1221 Longworth House Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jacky Rosen
United States Senate
713 Senate Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
United States Senate
425 Russell Senate Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

August 20, 2025

Dear Representatives Joyce and Ross and Senators Rosen and Wicker:

I write on behalf of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) to express support for ***the Specialty Physicians Advancing Rural Care (SPARC) Act (H.R.4681/S. 1380)***. This legislation would establish a loan repayment program as an incentive for specialists, including allergists and immunologists, to practice in rural communities.

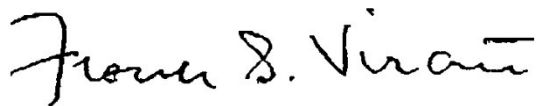
Established in 1943, the AAAAI is a professional organization with over 7,000 members in the United States, Canada and 72 other countries. This membership includes allergist/immunologists, other medical specialists, allied health and related healthcare professionals – all with a special interest in the research and treatment of patients with allergic and immunologic diseases.

More than 25 million Americans suffer from asthma, and the number of people with asthma only continues to grow. The disease kills 3,400 people each year and is responsible for an additional 7,000 deaths annually as a result of asthma-related complications. There is no cure for asthma, but once it is properly diagnosed and a treatment plan is in place patients are able to better manage their condition and improve their quality of life. An allergist/immunologist is the best-qualified physician to diagnose and treat asthma.

A recent workforce supply project by the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis examined the anticipated changes in the national supply of specialty physicians, including for Allergy/Immunology (A/I)¹. Previous workforce reports have found that there are approximately 1.43 A/I physicians per 100,000 population dispersed unevenly across the United States². **The SPARC Act** would help boost access to the A/I specialty workforce in more areas across the country by forgiving a percentage of student loans up to \$250,000 for specialty physicians that commit to practice in rural areas for six years. As such, the legislation would ensure that individuals suffering from allergic and immunological diseases living in rural communities would have better access to specialty care.

Thank you for your commitment to improve patient access to allergists/immunologists. AAAAI looks forward to working with you and your staff as issues related to allergy, asthma, and immunology arise, and would encourage you to contact Sheila Heitzig, JD, MNM, CAE, AAAAI Director of Practice and Policy, at (414) 272-6071 or sheitzig@aaaai.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank S. Virant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Frank S. Virant, MD FAAAAI
President, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

¹ <https://bhw.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/bureau-health-workforce/data-research/clinicalspecialties.pdf>

² <https://www.aaaai.org/Aaaai/media/MediaLibrary/PDF%20Documents/Practice%20and%20Parameters/2012-AI-Physician-Workforce-Report.pdf>