



Oregon Chapter
American College of
Emergency Physicians

Statement for the Record
Senate Health Care Committee
March 22, 2021
SB 143, Rural Medical Provider Tax Credits

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp and members of the committee, please accept this statement for the record on behalf of OR-ACEP, the Oregon Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians. OR-ACEP is a medical society that has represented physicians specializing in emergency medicine since 1971 and its members share a commitment to improve emergency healthcare for all Oregonians.

OR-ACEP strongly supports SB 143, the renewal of the rural medical provider tax credit. Recruiting board certified emergency physicians to rural areas is exceedingly difficult and they often earn up to 20 percent less than their colleagues in urban areas. The tax credit is considered a good incentive and is used for recruitment purposes.

Current law caps the adjusted gross income eligibility amount at \$300,000, except for OB-GYNS, rural surgeons and family physicians. We ask that you provide an exception for emergency physicians as well. The emergency department is part of the critical safety net especially in rural areas. At some rural hospitals, emergency physicians may exceed the current income cap in statute but they may also work long busy shifts, nights, weekends and holidays — the only way that hospital emergency departments can even stay open in remote parts of the state. Having access to board-certified emergency physicians is just as important as having access to OB/GYNs and general surgeons.

The average medical school debt now is over \$225,000, which severely limits the ability of young physicians to start families and buy homes, while taking a pay cut to work in rural areas. High student debt incurred during their ten years of training — not to mention the loss of income during that time period, is common. The rural medical provider tax credit is one tool to support physicians who choose to practice in rural Oregon.

Chapter President- Chris Strear, MD, FACEP **Chapter Executive-** Liz Mesberg
President-Elect- Chris Richards, MD, FACEP **Government Relations Director-** Katy King

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We urge your support to pass SB 143 and include emergency physicians in the group of physicians not subject to the income eligibility cap. This will be an incentive to increase the number of board certified emergency physicians in rural Oregon and will result in improved care for members of the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

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