



ASHT VIRTUAL CAPITOL HILL DAY 2019

Wednesday, October 2nd
CALL-IN DAY 📞



Issue Brief **Action Alert #1**

Support Allied Health Workforce Development and Diversity

Legislation supporting health professions education and training programs is making its way through Congress, and we need your help to get it passed.

The Educating Medical Professionals and Optimizing Workforce Efficiency and Readiness (EMPOWER) for Health Act of 2019 (H.R. 2781) seeks to expand access to care in underserved areas by supporting workforce development for professions like occupational therapy and physical therapy. The legislation, sponsored by Representatives Schakowsky (D-IL) and Burgess, M.D. (R-TX), would, among other things, authorize \$25 million in grants for occupational therapy, physical therapy, and audiology and speech-language pathology education programming that incentivizes workforce diversity.

Specifically, it would:

Direct the secretary to award grants to eligible entities to increase educational opportunities in the professions of physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, and speech-language pathology. Authorize \$5 million in funding for each year from fiscal 2020 through 2024.

The House Energy & Commerce Committee unanimously approved H.R. 2781 in July. The bill now awaits consideration before the full House of Representatives. Your voice is critical in helping to get this important legislation across the finish line.

Contact Your U.S. Representative TODAY. Call on them to cosponsor and pass H.R. 2781.

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Step 1 Getting Ready For Your Call

Use the Capitol Switchboard (**202-225-3121**) to be directly connected with the office of your Member of Congress or Senators.

Step 2 Call and Use Our Sample Script

Message to House Representative:

Hello, my name is [Your Name].

I'm a constituent and hand therapist from [City]. I am calling to urge Representative [Lawmakers Name] to help support key education and training programs for health care providers, like hand therapists, by cosponsoring the Educating Medical Professionals and Optimizing Workforce Efficiency and Readiness (EMPOWER) for Health Act of 2019 (H.R. 2781).

The legislation includes provisions that would authorize up to \$25 million in grants for occupational therapy, physical therapy, and audiology and speech-language pathology education programming to incentivize workforce diversity.

Hand therapists play a critical role in helping patients maximize function and manage acute and chronic upper extremity pain. This legislation will help ensure that your constituents have access to these vital services in their communities.

Thank you for passing on my message and for the Representative's consideration.

Message to the Senate:

Hello, my name is [Your Name]. I'm a constituent and hand therapist from [City].

This fall, Congress is poised to tackle legislation that would expand access to care in underserved areas by investing in workforce development programs for key health care professions.

During committee action in the House, language was included in H.R. 2781 that would authorize grants to incentivize diversity in the fields of occupational therapy, physical therapy, and audiology and speech-language pathology.

As the Senate considers efforts to advance their legislation to authorize health workforce programs, I urge Senator [Lawmakers Name] to call for the inclusion of these important programs.

Thank you for passing on my message and for the Senator's consideration.