AACAP Report Language Request

Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment Program: The Committee is concerned that the 2023 PSLRP application process did not adequately reflect the way pediatric subspecialty care is provided. The Committee is also concerned that pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, and child and adolescent psychiatrists, were underrepresented in the initial awards of the program despite the intent of the program when it was created. The Committee directs HRSA to work with stakeholders to ensure that the program’s application process includes clinical hour requirements and site eligibility criteria that are consistent with actual pediatric subspecialty practice and reflects the regionalization of pediatric specialty care. The Committee also directs HRSA to develop award criteria that ensure that more applicants with significant medical school debt can benefit from the program.

Request Justification: When Congress enacted this important program, its intent was to address the significant shortages facing pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, and child and adolescent psychiatrists, as well as the shortages facing other pediatric mental health professionals. These shortages continue and are impeding access to care for children with serious physical and mental health needs in underserved areas. Without a sufficient federal investment in the workforce of pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, and child and adolescent psychiatrists, children will continue to face long wait times for subspecialty care, need to travel long distances to receive that care, or go without care altogether.