

President

Kris Rehm, MD, SFHM
Nashville, Tennessee

President-Elect

Flora Kisuule, MD, MPH, SFHM
Baltimore, Maryland

Treasurer

Chad T. Whelan, MD, MHSA, SFHM
Tucson, Arizona

Secretary

Efrén C. Manjarrez, MD, FACP, SFHM
Davie, Florida

Immediate Past President

Rachel Thompson, MD, MPH, SFHM
Snoqualmie, Washington

Board of Directors

Bryce Gartland, MD, SFHM
Atlanta, Georgia

Kierstin Cates Kennedy, MD,
MSHA, SFHM
Birmingham, Alabama

D. Ruby Sahoo, DO, MBA, SFHM
Austin, Texas

Ann M. Sheehy, MD, MS, SFHM
Madison, Wisconsin

Mark W. Shen, MD, SFHM
Austin, Texas

Darlene Tad-y, MD, SFHM
Aurora, Colorado

Robert P. Zipper, MD, MMM, SFHM
Bend, Oregon

Chief Executive Officer

Eric E. Howell, MD, MHM

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Tim Kaine
U.S. Senate
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Todd Young
U.S. Senate
185 Dirksen Senate Office
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Kaine and Young,

The Society of Hospital Medicine, representing the nation's hospitalists, strongly supports the reauthorization of the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act (S. 3679). This bipartisan legislation begins to address a rapidly expanding issue of burnout among healthcare professionals. It establishes grants that support training in strategies to reduce and prevent suicide, burnout, behavioral health conditions, and substance use disorders among healthcare professionals. Furthermore, this legislation provides funding for programs to educate and promote mental and behavioral health in the healthcare workforce.

Hospitalists are front-line clinicians in America's acute care hospitals and focus on the general medical care of hospitalized patients. Rates of burnout were high and rising prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges like staffing shortages, exceedingly high patient volumes, and stigma surrounding mental health care and treatment further contribute to rising rates of burnout in the healthcare profession. The mental health and wellbeing of our healthcare workforce is in crisis and requires continued action. The signing of the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act into law in 2022 was an important first step – but we need to pass the reauthorization to ensure continued access to these vital mental health resources.

SHM supports the reauthorization of the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act because hospitalists and other healthcare workers deserve and require continued access to mental health support services. We are pleased to support this legislation and stand ready to support its passage.

Sincerely,



Kris Rehm, MD, SFHM
President, Society of Hospital Medicine