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June 12, 2020

USMLE Secretariat
3750 Market St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3102

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the approximately 8,500 physician and medical student members of the Indiana State Medical Association (ISMA). Last fall, our policy-making body expressed concerns about the financial burden of USMLE Step 2 CS on medical students. Specifically, our members were concerned with USMLE's historically limited number of testing centers, which meant many students had to travel long distances at great expense to a few national testing centers take the Step 2 CS exam. Since then, COVID-19 has changed most aspects of medical education and practice, and USMLE testing is no exception.

ISMA applauds USMLE's pilot expansion of regional testing centers, including the Midwest Regional Testing Center that opened June 1 at Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis. **We urge USMLE to make these new testing centers permanent and to allow more students to take the exam locally by adding even more testing sites.**

Our members' second concern was the cost of the Step 2 CS exam registration fee. ISMA is appreciative of the steps USMLE has taken to suspend the Step 2 CS for at least the next year. We have heard a collective sigh of relief from our medical student members after this news was released and will do all we can to make sure the necessary delays in testing do not affect their future careers from a state licensure perspective. However, ISMA is concerned about the cost of the Step 2 CS exam, should it be reinstated in the future. Given that there is [no data](#) to support a link between the exam and improved patient outcomes, the test's \$1,300 registration fee adds unnecessarily to medical students' educational debt, which averages over \$200,000 and can reach \$300,000. This debt burden has been [shown](#) to contribute to burnout in new physicians, and repayment obligations can eliminate their option to practice in underserved areas.

Accordingly, as USMLE continues to adapt to our new normal as the COVID-19 public health emergency continues, **ISMA respectfully requests the USMLE to consider reducing the Step 2 CS exam registration fee.**

Thank you for the steps you have taken this year and for your consideration of our requests for further action. Please contact Julie Reed, ISMA Executive Vice President, at (317) 261-2060 if you wish to discuss further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa A. Hatcher MD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Lisa Hatcher, MD
President, Indiana State Medical Association

Cc: Julie D. Reed, JD, Executive Vice President