



BOB CASEY

FIGHTING *for* PENNSYLVANIA FAMILIES

The Community Training, Education, and Access for Medical Students (TEAMS) Act, S. 3968

Investment needed to address physician shortages in rural, underserved communities

The [majority](#) of Health Professional Shortage Areas are in rural areas. These shortages of critical health care professionals, combined with [low income and geographic isolation](#), make it difficult for many Americans living in rural communities to access high-quality health care. Persistent disparities in morbidity and mortality between urban and [rural Americans](#) are well-documented as well as disparities in other [underserved communities](#).

Despite this, opportunities for medical students to train at sites in rural and underserved communities are much more limited than opportunities to train in large medical centers. [Research](#) suggests that students trained in rural areas are [more likely](#) to practice in those communities, but physician training [largely occurs in hospitals](#), which are concentrated in urban areas.

The Community Training, Education, and Access for Medical Students (TEAMS) Act

The Community Training, Education, and Access for Medical Students (TEAMS) Act would create a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant program to increase community-based training for medical students in rural and medically underserved communities. The legislation would allow one or more osteopathic or allopathic medical schools to apply for the grant funding, in partnership with one or more rural health clinics, Federal Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), or other health care facilities in underserved communities.

When applying for funding, applicants would be required to specify:

- Why federal assistance is needed to carry out the project;
- How the project will ensure continuous quality improvement;
- How individuals in a rural or medically underserved area will experience increased access to high-quality health care services across the continuum of care as a result of the activities funded by the grant;
- A plan for sustaining the project after federal support from the grant ends; and
- How the project will be evaluated.