(TEMPLATE LETTER FOR ALL PROVINCES EXCEPT QUEBEC. A TEMPLATE LETTER FOR QUEBEC WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE SHORTLY IN BOTH ENGLISH AND FRENCH.)

Date XXX

Dear XXXX: (EITHER YOUR MPP, MLA AND/OR YOUR MINISTER OF HEALTH)

I would like your support to establish for 2020 onward a level playing field for all qualified Canadians applying for residency training in Canada.

Canadians who study medicine abroad and who have successfully passed all required Medical Council of Canada exams should be able to compete for medical residency positions in Canada on the same terms as Graduates from Canadian and American medical schools instead of being streamed to a limited number of IMG positions with limited specializations.

TELL YOUR OWN STORY EITHER AS A CANADIAN MEDICAL STUDENT ABROAD (CSA), AS A CSA WHO HAS GRADUATED BUT HAS NOT YET MATCHED, AS A CSA TRAINING IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, AS A CSA PRACTICING MEDICINE ABROAD, AS A PARENT, A FAMILY MEMBER OR A FRIEND OF A CSA OR AS A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC WHO BELIEVES THAT THE SELECTION OF PHYSICIANS SHOULD BE OPEN TO ALL CANADIANS BASED ON COMPETENCE.

HIGHLIGHT AS MANY ARGUMENTS AS YOU FEEL TO EXPRESS YOUR SUPPORT OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED GOAL AND SUB-GOAL MENTIONED BELOW (I.E. UNIFORM EXAMINATION).

SEE OPTIONAL PARAGRAPHS BELOW THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO CERTAIN PROVINCES.

YOU CAN ALSO ASK TO **MEET WITH YOUR MPP OR MLA – OR TO HAVE YOUR MPP OR MLA CALL YOU BACK. IN FACT, WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE IT.** MPPs AND MLSs PLAYED A ROLE IN REVERSING THE STATEMENT OF NEED RESTRICTIONS WHICH, UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2018, PREVENTED A NUMBER OF CSAs FROM BEING ABLE TO TRAIN IN THE U.S.A.THESE TYPE OF ACTIONS GO A LONG WAY AND ARE REALLY WORTH YOUR EFFORT.

I am requesting that **equal access be established to compete for the same positions on the same terms** for all qualified medical graduates who are Canadian Citizens or Permanent Residents, including Canadian Medical School Graduates (CMGs), International Medical Graduates (IMGs) & United States Medical Graduates (USMGs), for **2020** onward. The (MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF YOUR PROVINCE) can instruct CaRMs that (YOUR PROVINCE) will cease streaming positions by location of graduation for both the first and second iteration in CaRMS, and for positions added by the (YOUR PROVINCIAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH), the Department of National Defense or other funding sources.

I am also asking that all medical graduates, including CMGs, IMGs and USMGs as well as Visa trainees, pass the same examinations in the same time frame, from 2021 onward. Currently only IMGs must complete exams before applying to the CaRMS Match. Because of this, there is no objective basis for comparing applicants and choosing the best applicant. The (YOUR PROVINCIAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH) can instruct (YOUR PROVINCE) Medical Schools as public institutions and CaRMS that (YOUR PROVINCE) will require this standard as of the Fall 2021 and to begin preparations now.

Entry to residency training is the appropriate time to evaluate all medical graduates’ abilities and aptitudes for medicine. It is the best time to determine which candidates, on their merit, should benefit from future investment in their training, regardless of where they received their medical degree. Past education subsidy of a Canadian medical school graduate’s training does not justify future investment in his/her residency. Recruiting for residency those candidates who are most effective, most resilient, and best suited to engage with patients and lead health care teams is a net gain in the long term.

A full outline of improvements to the training and recruitment of medical residents being sought by the Society of Canadian Medical Students Abroad is outlined in the following SOCASMA SEVEN document <http://socasma.com/general/socasma-seven/>

Sincerely,

XXXXX

cc. IF LETTER TO MPP OR MLA, SEND COPY TO MINISTER OF HEALTH

IF LETTER TO MINISTER OF HEALTH, COPY YOUR MPP OR MLA

YOU MAY ALSO WANT TO COPY YOUR PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATION OF FACULTIES OF MEDICINE, AS WELL AS THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS FOR YOUR PROVINCE.

FINALLY, IT WOULD NICE IF YOU COULD COPY SOCASMA (socasma@outlook.com) AS IT WOULD SHOW THAT WE HAVE STRENTHS IN NUMBERS AND ORGANIZATION

**Additional Points for consideration**

Being an inclusive society should not just be rhetoric; it should be real. Once a Canadian citizen or permanent resident has proven that (s)he has passed the examinations required to prove (s)he has the same knowledge and skills expected of a Canadian medical school graduate, there can be no legitimate reason to prevent that person from competing for higher education and training on the basis of individual merit and competence.

In addition to segregation and providing fewer positions and access to fewer disciplines to IMGs, three provinces provide additional barriers.

Alberta imposes a provincial residency requirement on IMGs. It does not impose this same restriction on CMGs. Fairness requires the same positions on the same conditions for IMGs and CMGs including provincial residency requirements.

The BC Clinical Assessment Program (CAP) creates another level of discrimination against IMGs. The CAP is mandatory for IMGs. It is not required for CMGs. The purpose of this CAP is not to weed out the unqualified, but to restrict the number of IMGs who can apply. Only 300 CAP assessments are available for over 1000 IMGs who typically apply to BC, preventing more than 700 IMGs who have the necessary qualifications from competing for residency training. BC does not block any of the almost 2000 CMGs who typically apply to BC, even if they just barely scraped through medical school.

To apply for residency, the College of Physicians of Quebec currently requires applicants to have completed their medical degree, received their diploma, and passed the necessary examinations. All documentation is then sent to the College of Physicians of Quebec to determine whether degrees are equivalent to that of a medical degree in Canada. This results in a delay in applications as CSAs cannot apply during the fourth year of medical school, as is the case with all other programs. Additionally, it deters applicants due to a lengthy and complicated process.

Moreover, CSAs who apply for medical residency in Quebec need to prove that they are Quebec residents. There is no reason to discriminate against Canadians from other provinces, especially as more and more are fluent in both French and English, a key requirement in Quebec. Given that many medical residency positions go unfilled, it would make sense for the Province of Quebec to consider applications other Canadians who are fluent in French, including francophones outside of Quebec, as well as from Canadians who have learned French as part of French immersion programs.

Fairness requires that ­**all** qualified Canadians be allowed to compete. A robust and efficient health care system demands that the best is selected from the pool of all qualified Canadians. We will pay, suffer, and lose more if we protect less able physicians and turn away more able physicians.