

February 4, 2025

President

Flora Kisuule, MD, MPH, SFHM
Baltimore, Maryland

The Honorable Tim Kaine
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Todd Young
U.S. Senate

President-Elect

Chad T. Whelan, MD, MHSA, SFHM
Oakwood, Ohio

231 Russell Senate Office Building 185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Washington, DC 20510

Treasurer

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

The Honorable Jack Reed
U.S. Senate
728 Hart Senate Office Building

The Honorable Roger Marshall
U.S. Senate
479A Russell Senate Office Building

Secretary

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

Washington, DC 20510

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Kaine, Young, Reed, and Marshall,

Immediate Past President

Kris Rehm, MD, SFHM
Nashville, Tennessee

The Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM), representing the nation's hospitalists, applauds your reintroduction of the reauthorization of the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Reauthorization Act (S. 266). Named after Dr. Lorna Breen, a physician who committed suicide in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic, this bipartisan legislation begins to address the rapidly expanding issue of burnout among healthcare professionals.

Board of Directors

Bryce Gartland, MD, SFHM
Atlanta, Georgia

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

This bill 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.

Mark W. Shen, MD, SFHM
Austin, Texas

Joe Sweigart, MD, SFHM
Lexington, Kentucky

Darlene Tad-y, MD, SFHM
Aurora, Colorado

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

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, with rates as high as 45% of hospitalists reporting burnout and nearly three-quarters of them not feeling professional fulfillment, according to SHM's 2024 Hospital Medicine Workforce Experience Report. The mental health and wellbeing of our healthcare workforce is in crisis and requires continued action.

Chief Executive Officer

Eric E. Howell, MD, MHM



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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Flora Kisuule' with a small dot at the end.

Flora Kisuule, MD, MPH, SFHM
President, Society of Hospital Medicine