



CARLOS VILLAPUDUA
Assemblymember, District 13

NEWS RELEASE

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Villapudua: Physician Shortage in Desperate Need of Attention

CA Future Physician Fund Aims to Lower Barriers to Entry for Incoming Medical Workforce

STOCKTON – Assemblymember Carlos Villapudua (D-Stockton) today announced [AB 2132](#), the California Future Physician Fund, to address California’s shortage of physicians and medical professionals.

“Although California continues to provide leading policies that ensure our residents can find healthcare insurance as needed, we remain vulnerable to the shortage of medical professionals across our state,” said Assemblymember Villapudua. “The financial barriers to entry have created significant gaps in our workforce – thus hindering our access to care – for many of our rural and underserved populations. Our physician shortage is creating longer delays in healthcare service, drives to offices or hospitals, and wait times for patients, which in turn discourages people from seeking care until absolutely necessary.”

Medical students on average graduate with more than \$280,000 in debt, and will often pay over \$400,000 in totality after interest. This debt creates a strong deterrent to the field, especially when scholarships and grants are not guaranteed for those with lower incomes. These financial challenges can prevent professionals from seeking employment in rural or underserved communities that can rarely afford the salaries offered in other areas of the state.

The [California Future Physicians Fund](#), sponsored by the California Medical Association which represents more than 50,000 physicians, would create a pilot program to provide scholarships to students in underserved communities from undergrad through medical school. Following the completion of their residency programs, these students will continue to provide care in the same communities they were educated in for a specified period of time.

“As a Stockton native and physician, I know all too well that this area lacks the number of primary care providers and specialists that it needs. This problem will continue to negatively affect access to care for our community. The CA Future Physician Fund will empower our young people and provide them the opportunity to succeed and serve in the communities that raised them,” said Dr. Cyrus Buhari, President- Elect of San Joaquin Medical Society.

“I have always dreamed of becoming a doctor, but the cost and hurdles of undergrad, medical school and residency are a huge barrier. By creating that end-to-end support, the CA Future Physician Fund represents opportunity that will give students like me the chance to pursue their dreams to be doctors and serve their communities,” said Alynna Nguyen, Senior at Stockton’s Health Careers Academy.

“California needs more primary care physicians – more than 11 million Californians live in an area that has a shortage of primary care providers. When I matched at San Joaquin General, I was beyond proud to bring back my medical education to serve the community that I call home. This program is so important because it will give others the same opportunity that I have by increasing our physician pipeline, nurturing a community example to inspire and empower more diverse young people to become doctors, and creating strong, community connections between patients and their doctors,” said David Araiza, MD, Resident at San Joaquin General Hospital.

In 2020, California led the nation in federally designated [Health Professional Shortage Areas](#). This continues to threaten the wellbeing of too many communities across our state as we aim to expand access to quality and efficient health care to every Californian.

