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February 20, 2024

**An Open Letter of Support for HB 24-1231**

Dear Members of the Colorado Legislature:

As a bipartisan coalition of business, community, civic, and nonprofit leaders, we are dedicated to the health and well-being of every Colorado resident and wish to express our support in HB 24-1231. This bill will increase the health professions workforce and infrastructure across the state, by preparing more doctors, nurses, veterinarians and allied health professionals in partnership with UNC, Metropolitan State University of Denver, Colorado State University and Trinidad State College.

UNC’s College of Osteopathic Medicine is uniquely positioned to address Colorado’s growing physician shortage by graduating an additional 150 doctors each year. Colorado is projected to need 1,800 additional primary care physicians by 2030 and UNC is poised to respond. This new College of Osteopathic Medicine will also boost Colorado’s economy by $1.4 billion over the next 20 years, with half a billion of that impact ($500.2 million) remaining in Weld County, according to a recently completed independent [economic impact study](https://www.unco.edu/news/articles/com-economic-impact-2024.aspx).

By establishing a College of Osteopathic Medicine, UNC will help meet a critical need for our community and the state. Because of UNC’s diverse student body and its history of excellence in the health sciences, housing a College of Osteopathic Medicine is a natural fit for the university.   
  
UNC launched the College of Osteopathic Medicine initiative following conversations with local hospital systems and community leaders. Those conversations were driven by concerns about Colorado’s growing need for more physicians and the university’s role in addressing that challenge.   
  
Opening the College of Osteopathic Medicine requires a minimum investment of $200 million, and HB24-1231 will secure the remaining $169 million. Donors to the university are already showing their support for this project by investing alongside the university.  Those gifts, combined with a [record-setting gift of $25 million](https://www.unco.edu/news/articles/college-of-medicine-weld-trust-gift-2023.aspx) from The Weld Trust, total over $31 million for this initiative.     
  
We ask that you help address Colorado’s physician shortage and strengthen its health profession workforce by supporting HB 24-1321 on behalf of UNC’s College of Osteopathic Medicine and its three higher education partners.

Signed,

*Community Member Names & Organization Names/Logos*