



## PPC Action Alert

### Urgent Opportunity for Pediatric Subspecialty Advocacy

We are reaching out with a **timely advocacy opportunity** to address shortages of pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, and child mental health professionals.

Help us advocate for **funding for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program (PSLRP)** to ensure children can receive the specialized care they need.

**Background on PSLRP:** In large part due to your advocacy, Congress has provided five years of funding for PSLRP. The program provides \$100,000 in loan repayment for pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, and child mental health professionals who provide care for children in underserved areas, addressing critical shortages of these highly trained professionals by lessening financial disincentives to pursuing pediatric specialty training.

**That's where we need your help!** The initial investments in PSLRP have been a crucial step forward, but **more funding is needed in FY 2027 to expand the program's reach.**

Two Senators – Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.) and Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-La.), a gastroenterologist – are circulating a bipartisan letter asking their fellow senators to join them in supporting robust funding for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program in FY 2027. Our goal is to get as many senators as possible to sign Sens. Reed and Cassidy's letter to show Senate appropriators the breadth of support for the program.

But the deadline for your senators to sign this letter is April 17 – so we need you to take action now!

**Please consider reaching out to your senators as soon as possible and ask them to sign the Reed/Cassidy letter supporting funding for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program!** A template email and phone script specifically for contacting your senators is available below.

*Thank you to those of you who previously reached out to your representatives last month to urge them to sign the House version of this funding letter. It is now important that your senators hear from you about why continued investment in PSLRP is essential for child health.*

### Contact Your Senators Today

Reach out to your U.S. senators today and urge them to sign the Reed/Cassidy letter supporting funding for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program. You can reach out to them by phone or email. If you have time, you can call and then follow-up via email to maximize your impact.

**By Phone:** You can call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to be connected to your senator's office. You can also find your U.S. senators by visiting [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov) and use the "Find Your Senators" feature at the top left of the page. The contact information for their Washington, DC office is available on their websites.

### **Talking points**

- Hello. My name is {First and last name} from {City/State}. I am an academic pediatrician {insert your area of research expertise e.g., pediatric endocrinology, etc.}, and I am calling today to urge {Senator's name} to sign Senator Reed and Senator Cassidy's letter supporting funding for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program.
- Across the country, there are significant shortages of pediatric subspecialists and child and adolescent psychiatrists. These are physicians with special training to take care of children with special health care or mental health needs.
- These shortages lead to long travel distances for parents seeking care for their children and long appointment wait times for developmental screenings, care for type 1 diabetes, and other essential care.
- Many pediatric researchers are trained as subspecialists and dedicate their careers to research on complex health needs like Type 1 diabetes and autism spectrum disorder. Shortages of pediatric subspecialists may also slow the development of the next generation of treatments and cures for young people.
- The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will help increase access to pediatric subspecialists who provide care in underserved and rural areas.
- I hope {Senator's name} will consider supporting funding for the program and sign Senators Reed and Cassidy's letter. The deadline to join is Friday, April 17.
- Thank you for all you do for children.

**By Email:** You can email your U.S. senators through their websites. You can find your U.S. senators on [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov) by using the "Find Your Senators" feature at the top left of the page. Email your U.S. senators through the contact form on their websites.

You can customize this email by adding an additional paragraph with specific information about yourself and your state, such as this:

I am an academic pediatrician specializing in {insert your area of research expertise e.g., infectious diseases, etc.}, which means I am {insert potential practical outcome of research e.g., looking for a cure for Type 1 diabetes}.

**Email text:**

*Subject: Strengthen Child Health and Mental Health in Rural and Underserved Areas*

*As a constituent, I'm urging you to sign Senator Jack Reed and Senator Bill Cassidy's letter supporting funding for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program in FY 2027.*

*Millions of children reside 1.5 hours or more from needed specialty care. Across the country, there are significant shortages of pediatric subspecialists and child and adolescent psychiatrists, which lead to long travel distances and appointment wait times for developmental screenings, care for type 1 diabetes, and other essential care.*

*Further, some parts of the country face more significant shortages than others, creating even larger barriers to care for many families. Children's ability to see the right doctor in a reasonable amount of time should not be determined by where they live.*

*The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will help increase access to pediatric subspecialists who provide care in underserved and rural areas. An increased investment will help expand its reach. It will provide \$100,000 in loan repayment in exchange for three years of providing care for an underserved area, helping address the economic factors that discourage individuals from subspecializing.*

*Please consider supporting funding for this program and sign the letter being circulated by Senators Reed and Cassidy. Contact Jill Boland in Sen. Reed's office or Ron Anderson in Sen. Cassidy's office for more information. The deadline to join is Friday, April 17.*

*Thank you.*