



**Office of
the President**

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December 19, 2008

Mr. Arthur F. (Skip) Oppenheimer
Chairman, IBCEE
P.O. Box 190163
Boise, Idaho 83719

Dear Chairman Oppenheimer and Members of the IBCEE:

Thank you for the information you provided in your letter, dated December 12, 2008. I applaud your attention and study of the current medical education discussion in Idaho. This is a leading concern in our times, and it deserves the best minds and efforts we can dedicate to it.

The state of health care in Idaho is not a short-term concern, nor does it require only a short-term solution. The challenges we face — including that of the physician workforce shortage you noted — did not suddenly occur. They are problems that have developed over time and thus require long-term solutions.

The pursuit of an Idaho-based medical education program is one we feel that is a long-term solution requiring relatively short time to get off the ground. Within a few years, we could accept the first class of 60 students and, four years later, graduate those students as physicians. Each following year would see the same production.

This is only one important consideration of the plan we propose. There are economic, educational, industrial and business benefits to be produced as well. This matter and our proposed plan are much greater than simply addressing a workforce shortage.

We would welcome the opportunity to make a presentation to your committee and the coalition. I am confident that sharing such information and engaging in a discussion would be fruitful for all of us. Your call "for a collaborative process involving all stakeholders" tells me you feel the same.

Please let me know when we can arrange such a presentation. I am eager for your involvement and discussion. I look forward to a vigorous exchange.

Respectfully,

Arthur C. Vailas, Ph.D.
President