

June 9, 2011

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
House Education & the Workforce Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Ranking Member
House Education & the Workforce Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20210

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20210

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senate and House Education and Appropriations Committee Leaders:

On behalf of the Federation of Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP), we are writing to ask that as Congress continues to negotiate funding for fiscal year (FY) 2012 that you retain the in-school interest subsidy on Federal Stafford loans for graduate and professional students.

The President's FY 12 Budget proposes to eliminate the in-school interest subsidy on Stafford loans for graduate and professional students in order to fund the Federal Pell Grant Program over the next 10 years. Demand for health professionals is estimated to remain strong for the foreseeable future. The elimination of this subsidy has the potential to undermine efforts to meet this demand by reducing the number of individuals initiating or completing their education. This proposed elimination would only provide a small amount of savings. Furthermore, implementing this proposal would disproportionately affect graduate students already carrying undergraduate debt. Although we understand the need to deal with our nation's deficit in a responsible manner, we believe it is counterproductive to eliminate the in-school interest subsidy.

As the Congress moves forward with its FY 12 Budget negotiations, our member organizations urge you to retain the in-school interest subsidy on Stafford loans for graduate and professional students. Your constituents will benefit from your leadership in promoting policies that support health professionals and sustain a quality health workforce.

Created in 1968 as a forum for representatives from organizations of health professions education, FASHP addresses education's role in organizational matters of health care, encourages effective collaboration among the health professions in education and practice, and prepares health professionals for the future. FASHP promotes health professions training programs, such as Titles VII and VIII, and programs related to education financing.

We thank you for your time and consideration of this matter. If you have questions or for additional information, please contact Pamela Murphy at pmurphy@aacom.org or (301) 968-4151.

Sincerely,

American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine
American Dental Education Association
American Podiatric Medical Association
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Chiropractic Colleges
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions