

FASHP

Federation of Associations of Schools of the Health Professions

American Association
of Colleges of Nursing
www.aacn.nche.edu

American Association
of Colleges of Osteopathic
Medicine
www.aacom.org

American Association
of Colleges of Pharmacy
www.aacp.org

American Association
of Colleges of
Podiatric Medicine
www.aacpm.org

American Dental
Education Association
www.adea.org

Association of American
Medical Colleges
www.aamc.org

Association of American
Veterinary Medical Colleges
www.aavmc.org

Association of
Chiropractic Colleges
www.chirocolleges.org

Association of Schools
and Colleges of Optometry
www.opted.org

Association of Schools
of Allied Health Professions
www.asahp.org

Association of Schools
& Programs of Public Health
www.aspph.org

Association of University
Programs in Health
Administration
www.aupha.org

Physician Assistant
Education Association
www.paeaonline.org

Council on Social Work
Education
www.cswe.org

Liaison Members:
American Psychological Association
www.apa.org

American Physical Therapy
Association
www.apta.org

March 9, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

The member organizations of the Federation of Associations of Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP) respectfully request that your Administration fully consider policies that support and strengthen health professions education and the future health care workforce.

FASHP was created in 1968 as a forum for representatives of health professions education institutions to address education's role in organizational patterns of health care; to encourage effective collaboration among the health professions in education and practice; to prepare health professions education for the future; and to serve as a liaison with other organizations sharing an interest in health professions education.

FASHP looks forward to working with your Administration to promote priorities vital to the nation's health care system that support health professions education institutions and the students they train.

Your Administration is uniquely positioned to champion effective solutions to the myriad of critical issues facing health professions education and the American health care workforce. We respectfully request that you support policies that appropriately support federal health professions programs under Title VII of the *Public Health Service Act* (PHSA) and nursing workforce development programs under Title VIII of the PHSA. By promoting such programs and policies, health professions training will continue to improve and produce a more patient-centered, team-based health care system that yields a significant return on investment.

Additionally, we respectfully request your Administration fully considers measures that sustain, expand, and create policies that recognize and prudently address the need for federal financial aid for health professions students in support of the completion of their education. The impending reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act* (HEA) provides a key opportunity to address policies that will help alleviate the significant debt burdens of health professions students.

As you know, health professions students graduate with relatively high debt compared to other programs. As a result, total student loan repayment often

exceeds two to three times the amount borrowed. Given the predicted health care workforce shortages that the nation faces, it is vital to retain and recruit a diverse health care workforce that will be able to collectively and collaboratively meet the rising health care needs and challenges of our nation.

However, existing restrictions for health professions students in federal financial aid policies do not align with the urgency of this impending reality.

With the anticipated reauthorization of the HEA, we ask that the following principles be considered:

- Reduce administrative and financial burdens that regulatory barriers place on health professions schools and the students they educate.
- Continue public service scholarship and loan repayment programs for health professions students and graduates to increase the health professions workforce in underserved areas.
- Support a diverse health professions workforce that mirrors and provides culturally-competent health care to the nation's patient populations.
- Encourage the delivery of high-quality, evidence-based health promotion, disease prevention, and patient care through interprofessional education.
- Strengthen the health professions pipeline education programs by keeping interest rates on federal graduate and professional student loans at levels that do not discourage students from pursuing health professions education.
- Support the Health Resources and Services Administration's Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs to improve the supply, distribution, and diversity of the health care workforce, and ensure an adequate pipeline to the health professions.
- Reinforce the distinct and principal role that academic accreditors play in the nation's educational quality and institutional education performance.

FASHP welcomes the opportunity to further discuss these important issues and stands ready and willing to serve as a resource to you and your Administration in working toward a well-trained health care workforce equipped to meet the demands of the American health care system in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

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Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry Association of Schools of Allied Health
Professions Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health Association of University
Programs in Health Administration Council on Social Work Education
Physician Assistant Education Association