

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

December 15, 2016

The Honorable Michael Pence
Vice President-Elect
Presidential Transition Team
Office of President-Elect Donald J. Trump
1717 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Vice President-Elect Pence:

The member organizations of the Federation of Associations of Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP) request that during this transition period, robust policies that support and strengthen health professions education and the future health care workforce are fully considered.

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 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 the incoming Administration to champion priorities critical to the nation's health care system that support health professions education institutions and the students they train.

In particular, we ask for your support of federal programs authorized under the *Public Health Service Act's* Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs, especially as the incoming Administration develops its health care priorities. These programs yield a significant return on investment as they provide critical support for improvements in health professions training for a more patient centered, team based health care system.

As changes continue to sweep the nation's health care landscape, the evolving organization, financing, delivery, and evaluation of health care emphasizes the growing need for collaboration among health professions as well as interprofessional patient care to improve cost effectiveness and patient outcomes.

Additionally, we respectfully ask that the developing policy platform of the incoming Administration include measures to sustain, expand, and create policies that 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. Unlike other career paths, the high debt burden of health professions education is frequently compounded by years of post-graduate residency training, which is required for certain professionals to practice independently. As a result, student total 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 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 on 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 and as the Trump Administration continues to build upon its educational policy platform, 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 professional 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 discuss these important issues with you and your staff and stand ready and willing to be a resource to the incoming Trump Administration to ensure that all Americans have access to a well-trained and well-equipped health care workforce to meet the demands of an evolving 21st century health care system.

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 Physical Therapy Association
American Psychological Association
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Chiropractic Colleges
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