



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
655 K Street NW, Ste. 700, Washington, DC 20001
PAEAonline.org • 703-548-5538

June 3, 2019

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), the organization that represents all 242 accredited PA programs operating in the United States, we are writing to offer comments on the current discussion draft of the Lower Health Care Costs Act. PAEA applauds the committee's bipartisan efforts to address key cost drivers in our nation's health care system and looks forward to the opportunity to collaborate to address these factors while simultaneously promoting access to care for patients.

Throughout its history, PAEA has prioritized both student diversity and curricular content concerning culturally competent care as a means of reducing health disparities and promoting health equity. **As such, we are strongly supportive of the creation of a new grant initiative for health professions programs intended to bolster discrimination prevention training for students in the provision of prenatal care, labor care, birthing, and postpartum care that is included in the current discussion draft as Section 407.** According to a recent report from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, over 1,500 PAs currently work in OB/GYN capacities — and we believe it is critical that they receive the necessary training, enabled by this program, to deliver culturally competent care to patients.¹ While the current draft identifies

¹ National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, *2018 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants*, Johns Creek, GA: NCCPA; 2019.

2019 PAEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jonathan Bowser, MS, PA-C
PRESIDENT

Howard Straker, EdD, MPH, PA-C
PRESIDENT ELECT

Lisa Mustone Alexander, EdD, MPH, PA-C
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Janie McDaniel, MS, MLS(ASCP)JC
SECRETARY

Carl Garrubba, MPA, PA-C, CPA
TREASURER

Kara Caruthers, MSPAS, PA-C
DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Gerald Kayingo, PhD, MMSc, PA-C
DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Dipu Patel, MPAS, PA-C
DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Michael Roscoe, PhD, PA-C
DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Kevin Schuer, DrPH, PA-C
DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Michel Statler, MLA, PA-C
DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Kathleen Holec, BS
STUDENT MEMBER AT LARGE

Timi Agar Barwick, MPM
EX OFFICIO MEMBER



accredited schools of allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, nursing, and other health professional training programs as eligible recipients, **we encourage you to explicitly name physician assistant education programs as eligible participants in future iterations. We further encourage you to include physician assistant education programs in Section 408 of the bill, requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct research and provide recommendations to health professions training programs on discrimination prevention and implicit bias training.**

We thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the current discussion draft of the Lower Health Care Costs Act and look forward to continued opportunities for engagement with the committee to improve access to care for patients through lower costs. Should you require additional information or if you have questions, please contact Director of Government Relations Tyler Smith at tsmith@PAEAonline.org or (703) 667-4356.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Bowser".

Jonathan Bowser, MS, PA-C
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timi Agar Barwick".

Timi Agar Barwick, MPM
Chief Executive Officer