



December 29, 2015

The Honorable Karen Bass
U.S. House of Representatives
408 Cannon Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 - 0537

Dear Representative Bass:

On behalf of the more than 104,000 nationally certified PAs (physician assistants) represented by the American Academy of PAs (AAPA), I am writing to thank you for your leadership in introducing H.R. 3943, the Physician Assistant Education Public Health Initiatives Act of 2015, and H.R. 3944, the Physician Assistant Higher Education Modernization Act of 2015.

As you are well aware, PAs are critical to increasing access to healthcare and provide high quality, cost effective medical services in virtually all medical and surgical settings. At a time when there is tremendous demand for PAs throughout our nation's healthcare delivery system, there are challenges to educating greater numbers of PAs. PA students face escalating education costs and student debt, and PA educational programs face a shortage of PA educators.

H.R. 3943 and H.R. 3944 amend the Public Health Service Act and Higher Education Act to support growth in the PA workforce by:

- Expanding scholarships for disadvantaged PA students and authorizing a loan repayment program for PAs who serve as faculty at a PA program or work in medically underserved areas
- Assisting PA educational programs to support PA faculty development
- Increasing federal loan limits for PA students to avoid reliance on high-interest commercial loans
- Providing financial assistance to PA educational programs at historically black colleges and universities, with additional grants to Hispanic serving institutions.

AAPA is very pleased to support H.R. 3943 and H.R. 3944, legislation designed to enhance federal funding opportunities to support the increased education of PAs. For further information, please do not hesitate to have your staff contact Sandy Harding, AAPA senior director, federal advocacy, at 571-319-4338 or at sharding@aapa.org.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Dorn
Chief Executive Officer