



July 30, 2024

Bruce A. Scott, MD  
President  
American Medical Association  
330 N Wabash Ave  
Chicago, IL 60611-5885

Dear President Scott,

The American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) writes on behalf of more than 178,000 dedicated physician associates (PAs) who are crucial to delivering high-quality, patient-centered care across America. PAs play an indispensable role in addressing healthcare disparities and ensuring equitable access to care. However, the American Medical Association's (AMA) ongoing campaign against PAs and other healthcare providers disregards their contributions and impedes progress in our nation's healthcare system.

We are currently facing one of the greatest provider shortages in history, with patient demand rapidly outpacing provider supply. By 2026, less than two years from now, there will be a shortage of 3.2 million healthcare workers. Today, 75 million patients are without adequate access to primary care, and 122 million are without adequate access to mental healthcare. In this critical moment, the focus must be on building a stronger, more resilient healthcare system — not on tearing down other professions.

All healthcare providers, whether physicians, PAs, or others, entered their respective fields with a shared commitment to improving patient outcomes and expanding access to care. The AMA's persistent disparagement of fellow healthcare providers reflects a troubling deviation from this core mission.

In 2023 alone, the AMA obstructed more than 100 bills aimed at expanding access to care and modernizing healthcare laws. This obstructionism is not merely a setback but a significant barrier to addressing the pressing challenges within our healthcare delivery system. Your campaign against "scope creep" is a thinly veiled effort to maintain outdated practices, rather than confronting the urgent issues we face today.

Claims made by the AMA about PAs and other healthcare providers are misleading and damaging. For instance, the assertion that modernized healthcare practice laws are harmful to patients is disproved by recent studies. [Analysis of 10 years of medical malpractice payment report \(MMPR\) data](#) reveals no increase in malpractice payments in states with more permissive PA practice environments. In fact, such environments have led to a reduction in malpractice payments for both PAs and physicians, highlighting that modernized practice laws improve patient safety.

Moreover, the claim that only physicians are trained to lead in healthcare is unfounded and overshadowed by the real priorities of patients. Research shows that [76% of patients prioritize the quality of care over the type of provider they see](#), underscoring the need to focus on care excellence rather than outdated hierarchies. PAs undergo rigorous education and training to practice medicine, and their

commitment to continuous learning and certification ensures they provide high-quality, expert care. This dedication to training and patient outcomes proves that the real focus should be on enhancing care quality, not preserving antiquated notions of provider hierarchy.

Your actions – spreading misinformation and using fear-mongering tactics – are deeply concerning and put your organization’s dangerous agenda above the interest of patients. Questioning the capabilities of PAs, who have more than 500 million patient interactions each year, undermines their contributions to the healthcare system nationwide and erodes public trust.

Furthermore, the AMA’s record over recent years shows a clear pattern of opposing legislative measures and public policies that would expand access to care and support the growth of our healthcare workforce. Your resistance to numerous federal and state bills has hindered progress, particularly in underserved communities. Additionally, the AMA has adopted a policy to oppose increases in public funding for PA training programs despite the ongoing provider shortage. These actions call into question the AMA’s motives and if the organization is truly focused on patients.

AAPA recognizes and values the importance of collaboration among all healthcare providers to achieve optimal patient care. The relentless attempt to control PAs and other providers is self-serving and irresponsible. We urge the AMA to cease its divisive campaign against PAs and other healthcare providers and engage in constructive dialogue about how to strengthen our healthcare workforce, promote health equity, and address the evolving needs of our patients.

Collaboration, rather than competition, must guide our efforts to build a robust and effective healthcare system. We extend our hand in collaboration and urge the AMA to join us in this critical endeavor.

To this end, we request a response to this letter by August 30 and propose our organizations convene to discuss a path forward.

Sincerely,



**Jason Prevelige, DMSc, MBA, PA-C, DFAAPA**  
President and Chair, Board of Directors  
AAPA



**Lisa M. Gables, CPA**  
Chief Executive Officer  
AAPA

CC: James L. Madara, MD  
CEO and Executive Vice President,  
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