



May 14, 2025

The Honorable Joe Courtney  
2449 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Courtney:

On behalf of the approximately 190,000 physician associates/physician assistants (PAs) and their patients in the United States, we are writing to thank you for introducing H.R. 3170, the Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act. The bill passed the House of Representatives during the 117th Congress with strong bipartisan support and has been unanimously passed by the Education and Workforce Committee in both the 117<sup>th</sup> and 118<sup>th</sup> Congress. We thank you for your continued support of patients and your steadfast commitment to ensuring that all Americans have access to high-quality healthcare services.

As you know, all US federal and postal employees receive workers compensation coverage for employment-related injuries and disease through the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA). However, FECA does not cover medical care overseen by PAs or nurse practitioners (NPs) within the current definition of "medical, surgical, and hospital services..." This means that once a federal or postal employee is injured on the job, they can no longer receive healthcare from a PA, even if that PA is their primary care provider (PCP) through their federal health insurance program.

This undue and unnecessary restriction negatively impacts our federal workforce, especially those in rural and underserved areas. PAs provide high-quality healthcare and are recognized providers in Medicare, Medicaid, and nearly every state and federal healthcare program, including state workers' compensation programs. PAs are included in the definition of an "acceptable medical source" by the Social Security Administration and thousands of PAs are federal employees themselves and practice within the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, the Public Health Service, and Indian Health Services.

FECA is an outlier among federal programs because it does not recognize the critical role PAs play in our healthcare system. PAs practice in all medical and surgical specialties in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and the uniformed services. PAs provide high-quality, cost-effective medical care in every specialty and setting, undertake rigorous education and clinical training, and are well established as trusted medical professionals.

The Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act would ensure that all federal employees have access to high-quality healthcare from the provider of their choice and would align FECA with state workers compensation programs to recognize PAs and NPs as covered providers. All Americans deserve timely access to quality healthcare, especially our federal workforce in rural and underserved areas who already face challenges in the daily function of their job serving this great nation.

We strongly support this critical legislation and appreciate all your efforts on behalf of patients across the nation. If you have any questions, please contact Tate Heuer at [theuer@aapa.org](mailto:theuer@aapa.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa M. Gables". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa M. Gables, CPA  
Chief Executive Officer