



**AAPA Statement for the Record to the House Committee on Education and Workforce’s Subcommittee on Workforce Protections Hearing: “Strengthening Federal Workers’ Compensation Programs: Ensuring Integrity, Efficiency, and Access”**

March 18, 2026

Subcommittee Chairman Mackenzie, Subcommittee Ranking Member Omar, Chairman Walberg, Ranking Member Scott, and Members of the Committee on Education and Workforce:

On behalf of the approximately 190,000 physician associates/physician assistants (PAs) throughout the United States, the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) thanks the committee for your leadership and continued emphasis on reforming the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA).

We would also particularly like to thank the subcommittee for holding a hearing last May titled “FECA Reform and Oversight: Prioritizing Workers, Protecting Taxpayer Dollars.” This hearing explored the need to reform and modernize FECA and positioned the full committee to consider and adopt by a unanimous vote the Improving Access to Workers’ Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act (H.R. 3170), which had been introduced by Chairman Walberg as well and Representative Courtney. H.R. 3170 takes the important step of ensuring injured federal workers have better access to high-quality, cost-efficient care, and improved continuity of care by including PAs and nurse practitioners as providers under FECA. That legislation was passed by this committee without opposition in both the 117th and 118th Congress. We are hopeful the House of Representatives will soon consider this critical legislation.

We appreciate that the subcommittee is holding an additional hearing today examining the further need to strengthen and improve efficiency and access under FECA. AAPA supports the committee’s consideration of H.R. 4122, the Health Care for Energy Workers Act. This bipartisan legislation by Representatives Rick W. Allen and Lucy McBath would update the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) to authorize PAs and NPs to order care for current and former Department of Energy (DOE) workers who receive health care under this Department of Labor (DOL) program. The EEOICPA provides compensation and medical benefits to employees who work or have worked in the nuclear weapons industry. Under current EEOICPA regulations, NPs and

PAs are unable to order home health care services for patients, creating unnecessary barriers to care, especially for patients in rural communities. AAPA strongly supports this legislation.

Undue and unnecessary restrictions such as these negatively impact our federal workforce, especially 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 Service.

EEOICPA and FECA are outliers among federal programs because these programs do 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.

We strongly support this critical legislation, H.R. 4122, and appreciate the committee's efforts on behalf of patients across the nation. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Tate Heuer, VP of Federal Advocacy for AAPA, at [theuer@aapa.org](mailto:theuer@aapa.org) or at (517) 319-4338.