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Statement for the Record
Submitted to
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce
Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee
“How SCOTUS’s Decision on Race-Based Admissions is Shaping University Policies”
September 28, 2023

The PA Education Association (PAEA), representing the 303 accredited PA programs in the United States, welcomes the opportunity to submit a statement for the record regarding the impact of the recent Supreme Court ruling on race-based admissions policies in higher education.

In June 2023, the Supreme Court’s decision in the case of *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College* represented one of the most significant setbacks for the efforts of health professions education to ensure access to culturally competent care for patients in recent memory. At a time of persistent barriers to matriculation for members of communities underrepresented in medicine (URiM), the Supreme Court’s prohibition on the consideration of race as a factor within a holistic admissions process presented a new challenge to PA educators seeking to expand access to equitable care.

Faced with an unprecedented paradigm shift while continuing to recognize the value of a diverse health workforce in ensuring high-quality care for all, PA programs throughout the country have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to recruiting cohorts of students that reflect the communities they will go on to serve. While the Supreme Court’s decision created

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new barriers in the admissions process, programs have redoubled recruitment initiatives for URiM students through programs like Project Access - a long-standing and successful initiative that exposes high school students to the steps necessary to successfully pursue a career as a PA. Beyond recruitment, programs have also renewed efforts to ensure already-matriculated URiM students have the support necessary to complete their programs and proceed to provide care to communities in need. These efforts, among others, reflect the strong and ongoing commitment of PA educators to both support students and ultimately ensure health equity for patients.

While PA education has demonstrated resilience in the aftermath of the Supreme Court's decision, federal policymakers have a key role to play in mitigating the harmful long-term impact of the decision. **PAEA urges the subcommittee to support efforts to break down barriers for students seeking careers in the health professions through continued and increased support for pipeline development programs, federal student aid, and resources for PA program development at institutions such as historically Black colleges and universities.** While the Supreme Court's decision presented new challenges, these strategies have consistently proven effective in expanding access to higher education for students and should therefore be prioritized for the subcommittee's consideration.

PAEA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Association's perspective on the impact of the Supreme Court's decision and looks forward to serving as a resource to members and staff. Should you require additional information or have questions, please contact Tyler Smith, Senior Director of Government Relations, at tsmith@PAEAonline.org or 703-667-4356.