



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

655 K Street NW, Ste. 700, Washington, DC 20001
PAEAonline.org • 703-548-5538

June 9, 2022

The Honorable Gary Peters
Chair
Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Portman:

On behalf of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), the national organization representing all 287 accredited PA programs in the United States, we are writing in support of the Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act. This legislation would be a critical step forward in strengthening access to care by removing outdated barriers that prevent PAs from providing services to injured federal employees that are well within the scope of their education and experience. As such, PAEA strongly supports the bill and is committed to working with you and other stakeholders to ensure its enactment.

As you are aware, PA education is based upon a rigorous, standardized medical training model that prepares all graduates to deliver the high-quality care that patients deserve. Over the course of an, on-average, 27 month, graduate-level program, all PA students receive both classroom-based instruction and approximately 2,000 hours of clinical training experience under the supervision of practicing clinicians. Following the completion of their national certification exam and licensure at the state level, PA graduates are equipped to deliver care in all practice settings and specialties, often serving as the principal health care provider for patients. Based upon the more than 50-year history of excellent care delivered by PA

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graduates, the federal government has consistently sought to expand utilization of PA-provided services with the VA currently serving as the largest employer of PAs in the U.S.

Under existing law, federal and postal workers are unable to receive workers' compensation covered-care delivered by PAs and NPs for employment-related injuries and occupational diseases. Currently, the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) restricts eligible providers to surgeons, podiatrists, dentists, clinical psychologists, optometrists, and osteopathic practitioners - a significant impediment to the ability of injured federal workers to receive care from well-qualified PAs and NPs. This bill would ensure that services rendered by PAs and NPs are covered under FECA for federal employees, resulting in both expanded access to care and considerable savings for the federal government.

Thank you for your support of the PA profession as we seek to fully leverage the capacity of PA graduates to care for injured federal workers. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Senior Director of Government Relations Tyler Smith at tsmith@PAEAonline.org or at 703-667-4356.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara Caruthers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names clearly legible.

Kara Caruthers, MSPAS, PA-C
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sara F. Fletcher". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first and last names clearly legible.

Sara Fletcher, PhD
Interim Chief Executive Officer