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Statement on Implications of H.R.1 on Pharmacy Education



For immediate release

Arlington, Va.—The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP), in conjunction with the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy, American College of Clinical Pharmacy, American Pharmacists Association (APhA), American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, and the Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association, acknowledges the recent passage of H.R.1, the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” by the U.S. House of Representatives. While long-term fiscal sustainability in our federal government is clearly a priority, we are deeply concerned that several provisions related to higher education financing will have substantial negative consequences on the healthcare workforce pipeline, particularly on pharmacy.

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access to student loans, we risk sidelining an entire generation of talent and potential.

Among the most concerning provisions are eliminating the Grad PLUS loan program, limits on federal student loans, and the proposed institutional risk-sharing measures. The average student loan debt at graduation across all colleges and schools of pharmacy is around \$171,000. ^[1] These policy shifts, if enacted, will create new barriers to pharmacy education at a time when our country faces a shortage of pharmacists across a range of settings—from community pharmacy and practice in rural clinics to hospitals, specialty care, and those working in public. ^[2]

Pharmacy education is a high-value, high-cost endeavor preparing medication experts and frontline health providers. Without adequate access to student loans, we risk sidelining an entire generation of talent and potential. Placing new financial liabilities on schools based on students' employment outcomes, without accounting for structural inequities in healthcare labor markets, undermines efforts to advance our profession and support students in high-need, lower-income regions.

We urge U.S. Senators to carefully reconsider these provisions in the context of our nation's urgent pharmacy workforce needs. The proposed changes risk shrinking the pharmacy pipeline, destabilizing pharmacy schools, and ultimately jeopardizing patient access to essential medication care.

To Make America Healthy Again, investing—rather than restricting—access to high-quality health professions education must be part of our vision. Pharmacy educators, students, and alumni stand ready to inform bipartisan efforts that balance fiscal responsibility with our nation's healthcare imperatives.

^[1] American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. 2024 Graduating Student Survey National Summary Report. Published August 2024. Accessed May 22, 2025. <https://www.aacp.org/node/3456>

^[2] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Pharmacists. Occupational Outlook Handbook. Updated April 2025. Accessed May 22, 2025. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/pharmacists.htm>
