

September 15, 2026

The Honorable Chairman Morgan Griffith
House Committee on Energy & Commerce
Health Subcommittee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ranking Member Diana DeGette
House Committee on Energy & Commerce
Health Subcommittee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Hearing on “Examining Legislative Proposals to Reform Medicare Provider Payment and Bolster Health Care Cybersecurity

Dear Chairman Griffith and Ranking Member DeGette:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP), thank you for convening the September 15 hearing, “Examining Legislative Proposals to Reform Medicare Provider Payment and Bolster Health Care Cybersecurity,” including consideration of H.R. 3164, the Ensuring Community Access to Pharmacist Services Act. AACP welcomes this opportunity for Congress to examine how the education, training, and clinical capabilities of pharmacists can help inform policies intended to improve access to care for Medicare beneficiaries.

AACP represents 141 accredited colleges and schools of pharmacy with more than 6,400 faculty; 62,500 students enrolled in professional programs and 5,100 individuals pursuing graduate study. Notably, many pharmacy faculty are also practicing pharmacists who provide direct patient care while preparing the next generation of pharmacists to meet the evolving health needs of their communities. Pharmacists complete rigorous Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) education that includes advanced preparation in pharmacotherapy, pathophysiology, patient assessment, evidence-based clinical decision-making, and therapeutic treatment planning. Student pharmacists also complete extensive experiential education in direct patient-care settings. All accredited pharmacy programs are required, under the 2025 Standards from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, to deliver didactic training that includes evidence based clinical decision making, as well as therapeutic treatment planning which includes diagnosing and prescribing. Understanding these competencies is particularly important as Congress considers approaches to persistent gaps in access to primary care.

HRSA reports that approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population lives in a designated primary medical care Health Professional Shortage Area and projects a shortage of approximately 70,600 primary care physicians by 2038, with particularly significant shortages in nonmetropolitan communities.¹ In this environment, examining how appropriately trained health professionals, including pharmacists, can contribute within their education, competencies, and state-authorized scope of practice is increasingly important to maintaining timely access to patient care. The Subcommittee’s hearing provides an important opportunity to better understand the education and clinical preparation of pharmacists to furnish certain testing, evaluation, and treatment services contemplated under Medicare. The bill itself limits covered pharmacist services to those the pharmacist is legally authorized to perform under state law, reinforcing the importance of an informed discussion regarding pharmacist training and practice authority.

AACP appreciates the Subcommittee’s leadership in examining these issues and stands ready to serve as an educational resource to Congress regarding pharmacy education, the competencies of the pharmacist workforce,

¹ Health Resources and Services Administration. *Health Workforce Shortage Areas*. HRSA Data Warehouse. Updated August 27, 2026. Accessed September 11, 2026.

and the preparation of future pharmacists to help meet the nation's evolving patient-care needs. If you have questions or if AACP can assist your office in future efforts, please contact Olunife Akinmolayan, AACP Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Strategic Engagement at okinmolayan@aacp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee Vermeulen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lee" being more prominent than the last name "Vermeulen".

Lee Vermeulen, BSP Pharm, MS, FCCP, FFIP
Executive Vice President and CEO
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy