



August 21, 2025

Subject: Advocating for Equitable Treatment of Health Professions Graduate Programs Under H.R.1. - 119th Congress (2025-2026): One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBB)

Dear AUPHA Members, Partners, and Friends:

The U.S. Department of Education’s implementation of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBB) may have significant consequences for students pursuing graduate degrees in healthcare management.

As currently proposed, the OBBB does not clearly define which programs qualify as “professional degree programs.” This ambiguity puts essential health professions degrees—including the Master of Health Administration (MHA), Doctor of Health Administration (DHA), and equivalent graduate degrees—at risk of being excluded from higher federal loan limits. If not corrected, this could unfairly restrict access to financial aid for our students, lessen opportunities for financially disadvantaged students, and threaten the pipeline of future healthcare managers and leaders.

At AUPHA, we believe strongly that all health professions graduate programs must be treated the same in federal higher education policy. Our students deserve the same recognition and support afforded to other professional degree programs.

AUPHA is actively advocating for these priorities—both independently and in collaboration with the Federation of Associations of Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP) and other coalitions—through formal public comments and ongoing engagement with the U.S. Department of Education.

Our recommendations include:

- Explicitly including MHA, DHA, and equivalent masters and doctoral degrees in the definition of “professional degree programs”
- Establishing loan limits that reflect the actual cost of graduate healthcare management education

- Ensuring transparent and equitable policy implementation for all health professions disciplines

You can read the proposed rule [here](#). See TITLE VIII - COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS, Subtitle B — Loan Limits

You can read AUPHA's full public comment letter to the Secretary of Education [here](#).

We encourage you and/or your institution to submit your own public comments to the Department of Education by August 25, 2025. Comments may be submitted by individuals or by an academic department, school/college, or university's leadership. You are welcome to use or adapt AUPHA's letter in whole or in part.

Our collective voice is vital. Let's ensure that healthcare management—and all health professions—are fairly supported in federal financial aid policy.

Thank you for your leadership, support, and advocacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Gentry', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel Gentry, PhD, MHA
President and CEO
Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA)