



**Paul W. Abramowitz, Pharm.D., Sc.D. (Hon), FASHP**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

November 27, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chair, Senate HELP Committee  
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member, Senate HELP Committee  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Alexander and Murray,

On behalf of ASHP (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists), I appreciate the opportunity to present ASHP's perspective on healthcare reform at the federal level. ASHP is extremely encouraged by the bipartisan effort you have initiated to help stabilize the health insurance market and preserve access to care. We look forward to meeting with you to provide insights based on [ASHP's Priorities for Healthcare Reform](#), and to seeing specific policy language as a result of this important bipartisan effort.

ASHP's nearly 45,000 members are committed to providing patient care that helps patients achieve optimal health outcomes. ASHP helps its members achieve this goal by advocating and supporting the professional practice of pharmacists in hospitals, health systems, ambulatory care clinics, and other settings spanning the full spectrum of patient care. ASHP serves its members as their collective voice on issues related to medication use and public health.

ASHP advocates insurance coverage for all residents of the United States, including coverage of medications and related pharmacist patient-care services.<sup>1</sup> We believe reforms should be crafted to protect patient access to the full continuum of care, from preventive services to acute and long-term care. This includes mental health coverage and treatment for substance abuse, which are vital to combating the nation's opioid epidemic. Further, ASHP believes that safe and effective medication use should be a component of all proposed solutions to the central healthcare reform issues of access, cost, and quality.

Additionally, ASHP supports pharmacists as non-physician patient care providers, and we believe that all healthcare programs, both public and private, should fully incorporate pharmacists as full providers of care as it relates to medication use. Current and evolving care delivery models are team-based approaches that rely on the unique expertise of each team member. Pharmacists, as the medication-use experts, are an essential component of these care models. Pharmacists work collaboratively with physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals to ensure that medication use is safe and effective. Further, as the most accessible of all healthcare practitioners, pharmacists can provide basic access to care, especially in areas that are underserved. Legislation before your committee, S. 109, the "Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act" would address that gap in care by enabling pharmacists to better apply their full expertise and training to Medicare beneficiaries in underserved areas, pursuant to their state scope of practice. ASHP is a proud supporter of this legislation, and we believe it is a critical component of emerging care models that make best use of the expertise of each member of the care team.

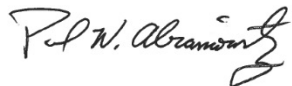
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<sup>1</sup> ASHP Policy 1001: Health Insurance Coverage for U.S. Residents

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Once again, we are greatly appreciative of your efforts to stabilize our nation's healthcare marketplace, and we remain encouraged that this can be accomplished in a bipartisan manner. Should you have any questions or comments as the bill progresses, please contact me or have a member of your team contact Christopher Topoleski, Director of Federal Legislative Affairs at 301-664-8806 or at [ctopoleski@ashp.org](mailto:ctopoleski@ashp.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul W. Abramowitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "P" and a long, sweeping tail.

Paul W. Abramowitz