



## **HEAL Coalition ALERT: Introducing the Higher Education Allied Health Leaders Coalition**

Improvements to the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) promoting institutional equality and enhanced student access & benefits under the student financial aid programs are – and should be – the primary legislative advocacy goal of private career colleges and schools. However, there is also an urgent need for proprietary institutions offering programs in allied health to expand their political influence to include promotion of the critical role the proprietary sector plays in preparing qualified professionals for careers in allied health professions.

Today, there are a significant number of bills pending in the U.S. House and Senate that relate to the education and training of allied health professionals. Several are currently drafted in such a manner as to prohibit or limit private career colleges' and students' eligibility and/or participation. In many instances, the legislation is prohibitive simply because it picks up the more limited definition of an “institution of higher education” contained in Section 101 of HEA, not the proprietary-inclusive definition found in Section 102.

All of these bills, along with an even larger number that propose modifications, revisions or additions to the laws like the Public Health Service Act, drive many of the rules and regulations that govern how care is given in various allied health professions. These legislative proposals have the potential to impact – positively or negatively – proprietary institutions' ability to continue providing quality education to students seeking careers in allied health professions.

Unfortunately, the proprietary allied health sector is not only unaware of these bills, but uninformed on the ways any one of these bills could impact everything from an institution's curriculum, to its enrollments, to its competitive positioning within the broader higher education community.

Furthermore, the Committees and Federal Agencies that have jurisdiction over the development and implementation of allied health legislation and related regulations are not the ones the proprietary community is familiar with or has established relationships with. The House Energy and Commerce Committee, not the House Education and the Workforce Committee, holds jurisdiction over public health programs and is responsible for drafting and considering legislation in the House. And it is the Department of Health and Human Services, not the

Department of Education, which oversees the rules & regulations and implementation of the changes, revisions, and additions enacted by Congress.

But perhaps the most alarming news is the reality that, while the proprietary sector does not have a voice in this debate, the public higher education community does!

The Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions and the National Network of Health Career Programs in Two Year Colleges specifically lobbies for the interests of traditional universities and community colleges that offer education in allied health disciplines. Their Board is comprised of Presidents and Deans from state colleges and universities, community colleges, and other public institutions across the country. These organizations are visible and established Capitol Hill, which may help to explain why so many of the legislative proposals prohibit proprietary institution and student access and eligibility.

The time has come for the proprietary allied health community to form its own voice in Washington, D.C.!

Become a Member of the Higher Education Allied Health Leaders (HEAL) Coalition now. With your participation and support, we can establish our own identity and promote the interests of the proprietary allied health community.

Congress must be reminded of the quality education and training private career colleges and schools provide to a large and growing segment of the allied health professions workforce. We must ensure that as legislation impacting allied health is being developed it is with our interests, and those of the professionals we educate, in mind. Join now, and through effective advocacy we can make a difference!

If you are interested in joining us, or would like more information regarding the HEAL Coalition, contact Executive Director Tom Netting at (202) 626-8553.