



Office of the President

PRESIDENT'S WRITTEN TESTIMONY

David M. Carlisle, MD, PhD

President and CEO

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science

Charles R Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU) in South Los Angeles was founded in 1966 in the wake of the historic Watts Rebellion to cultivate diverse health professional leaders who are dedicated to social justice and health equity for underserved populations. CDU has an ambitious yet attainable vision of a future with excellent health and wellness for all in a world without health disparities. Having diversity across all health care, including researchers, practitioners, administrators, educators, and policy makers, is an essential component in making this vision a reality. CDU's participation in education, research, clinical service, and community engagement indicates certain strategies will support achieving this goal.

Providing quality health professions education opportunities to students of color will ensure and expand a pipeline of diverse and diverse-minded nurses, doctors, dentists, physician assistants, and technicians, who create a more equitable and culturally competent health care landscape. This can be attained through the continued or increased support for Historically Black Medical Schools. These institutions hold a unique and valuable position within the medical profession by providing opportunities for those who have historically been denied equal access to higher education.

Investing in the health and growth of America's Historically Black Medical Schools is investing in the health and growth of our most underserved communities across the nation. As non-profit institutions, we rely on the support of the government, philanthropist, corporations, partners, and the community to pursue our mission, build our endowments, support hard scale construction, and provide the best learning experiences for the next generation of the medical workforce.

Addressing the shortage of graduate medical education slots/residency positions must also be a priority. Every year, thousands of aspiring physicians are unable to find a residency opportunity. Most will have to wait an entire year to reapply to practice medicine, preventing them from filling the physician shortage.

Innovative initiatives like the National Health Service Corps, of which I am an alumnus, provide scholarships and loan repayment opportunities for new medical professionals. These programs

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A Private University with a Public Mission

increase access to quality health care in communities every day and deserve whatever support can be mustered to maintain and grow them.

In undergraduate education, funding summer programs, increasing scholarships, and supporting stipends for work study efforts would go a long way towards decreasing the dropout rate among minority populations that is bottlenecking the supply of medical school candidates. Providing resources and support to expand the scope and number of pre-med and undergraduate medical education programs at colleges and universities in communities of color would also increase the flow of students into 4-year medical programs, and ultimately into the workforce.

It is our hope at CDU that these ideas and initiatives can be provided the support they need from the highest levels of our government in order to move them forward in a timely manner so the issue of the health professional shortages and health workforce diversity can be meaningfully addressed.