

Meharry Medical College President Testifies Before the U.S. House of Representatives

Dr. Wayne J. Riley urged House Appropriations Subcommittee to increase funding to federal programs supporting Meharry and the nation's 12 other minority health professions schools

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Wayne J. Riley, M.D., MPH, MBA, MACP, President & Chief Executive Officer of [Meharry Medical College](#), testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Wednesday in his new role as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools (AMHPS).

AMHPS is a consortium of the nation's 13 historically black medical, dental, pharmacy and veterinary schools. Dr. Riley testified that the historic passage of the health reform bill will result in an increased demand for minority health professionals. He called for increased funding of core federal programs that support AMHPS institutions.



"The need to produce more health professionals will only increase with more citizens having access to health care," Riley said.

Dr. Riley told the House Subcommittee that minority health professionals address a critical national need because they are significantly more likely to work in rural and medically underserved areas, provide care for minorities and treat low-income patients. Riley also noted the disparity in African Americans in the health care workforce with blacks representing approximately 13 percent of the national population and approximately 3 percent of the

nation's health care workforce.

"After the historic passage of the health reform bill, which AMHPS supported, the nation's supply of health professionals, especially minority health professionals which tend to serve more in underserved areas, will be more in demand," Riley said. "The minority health professions institutions and their major sources of funding address a critical, national need."

Dr. Riley called for President Obama's fiscal year 2010-2011 federal budget to include:

- \$300 million for the Title VII Health Professions Training programs
- \$500 million for the National Institutes of Health's National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities
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- \$100 million for the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Minority Health
- \$100 million for the Department of Education's Strengthening Historically Black Graduate Institutions Program
- Support of the National Center for Research Resources including \$50 million for extramural facilities construction

About the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools (AMHPS): Established in 1976, AMHPS is a consortium of the nation's 13 historically black medical, dental, pharmacy and veterinary schools. The members are two dental schools at Meharry Medical College and Howard University; four schools of medicine at Meharry Medical College, Morehouse School of Medicine, Charles Drew University and Howard University; five schools of pharmacy at Florida A&M University, Hampton University, Howard University, Texas Southern University and Xavier University; and one school of veterinary medicine at Tuskegee University.

About Meharry Medical College: Meharry Medical College is the nation's largest private, independent, historically black academic health center dedicated solely to educating minority and other health professionals. True to its heritage, it is a United Methodist Church affiliated institution. The College is particularly well known for its uniquely nurturing, highly effective educational programs; emerging preeminence in health disparities research; culturally sensitive, evidence-based health services; and significant contribution to the diversity of the nation's health professions workforce. Diverse Issues in Higher Education's ranking of institutions annually lists Meharry as a leading national educator of African Americans with M.D. and D.D.S. degrees, and Ph.D. degrees.

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