

SCOTUS affirmative action ruling “undermines the health of our nation”

JUN 29, 2023

Statement attributable to:

Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, M.D., M.P.H.

President, American Medical Association

“Today’s decision by the U.S. Supreme Court undermines decades of progress centered on the educational value of diversity, and will reverse gains made in the battle against health inequities. This ruling restricts medical schools from considering race and ethnicity among the multiple factors in admissions policies and will translate into a less diverse physician workforce. Diversity is vital to health care, and this court ruling deals a serious blow to our goal of increasing medical career opportunities for historically marginalized and minoritized people.

“While our country grows more diverse, historically marginalized communities have been left behind on nearly every health indicator. A physician workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation is key to eliminating racial inequities. There is [convincing evidence](#) that racially diverse care teams produce measurably positive health outcomes for patients in historically marginalized populations. The goal is not racially segregated care, but rather a health care workforce in which racial and ethnic representation is a more common aspect of care teams.

“[Recently established AMA policy](#) reinforces our stance that medical schools must continue to make progress toward enrolling talented and highly qualified medical students in racial and ethnic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in medicine. Eliminating health inequity requires more commitment to, investment in and support for Black, Latinx and Native American and Indigenous communities, and LGBTQ+ people. Yet, today’s ruling undermines policy that was producing positive results and improving the health of our patients, as well as making all physicians better practitioners. This ruling is bad for health care, bad for medicine, and undermines the health of our nation.”

###