



November 14, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Thune, Leader Jeffries, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of 63 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community Coalition (NCC), we recognize how important passing full-year appropriations is to supporting our current and future nurses who are so vital to the health of our nation. As we have seen this past year, a long-term CR results in cuts to essential federal nursing programs and is not the answer--which is why funding nursing workforce and research programs, and ensuring the retention of the department, agency, and division staff that supports this work, is so important. As Congress works to advance a bipartisan fiscal year (FY) 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (LHHS-ED) Appropriations bill, we urge maximum federal funding for all Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR). **Specifically, these funding levels should be, at a minimum, consistent with the allocations outlined by the Senate Appropriations Committee, which includes at least \$303.472 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]) and at least \$197.693 million for NINR.**

Investing in our Nation's Health: The Need to Support Federal Nursing Programs

The NCC is a cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the nursing profession. Together, the NCC represents Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs),¹ nurse leaders, boards of nursing, students, faculty, and researchers. As the largest segment of the healthcare profession,² nursing is involved at every point of care. We recognize that supporting healthcare in all communities, including in our rural and underserved areas, requires continued investments in nursing. This is especially true as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects the demand for RNs will increase 5% by 2034, which

¹ APRNs include certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and nurse practitioners (NPs).

² Smith, Sean and Blank, Andrew. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (June 2023) Healthcare Occupations: Characteristics of the Employed. Slide Two: Employment in the 25 largest healthcare occupations, 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2023/healthcare-occupations-in-2022/>

includes approximately 189,100 RN openings projected each year over the next decade.³ The demand for most APRNs is also expected to grow by 35%.⁴ These needs are compounded by continued nurse staffing shortages and high workloads that strain the profession. In fact, the 2024 National Nursing Workforce Survey revealed 138,000 nurses have left the workforce since 2022 and more than 40% of respondents expressed an intent to leave or retire in the next 5 years.⁵ With an aging population and an increased need for nurses throughout the country, bold investments in Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and NINR are critical, not only as we address the current needs of the profession, but as we prepare for the healthcare workforce of tomorrow.

Title VIII Nursing Workforce Programs: Essential to Supporting America's Health

As the largest dedicated federal funding source for nurses, Title VIII programs bolster and sustain the nation's nursing pipeline by addressing all aspects of nursing workforce demand. From scholarship and loan repayments, to supporting APRNs and future faculty, Title VIII programs offer a strategic and cost-effective approach to supporting the nursing workforce and patients across the country. For instance, in Academic Year (AY) 2022-2023:

- Advanced Nursing Education (ANE) programs supported more than 8,000 students and provided for “over 2 million hours of patient care and nearly 900,000 patient encounters [that] occurred in medically underserved communities.”⁶
- Graduates of Title VIII not only advance their education but also work or serve in medically underserved areas. In fact, more than three-quarters of Nurse Corps providers were employed in community-based settings and 20% were in rural communities.⁷
- 74% of Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) graduates from AY 2021-2022 were in faculty positions one year later, with the majority teaching at the bachelor's level or higher.⁸
- Programs like Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention (NEPQR), supported over 10,300 nurses and nursing students, help with the development, distribution, and retention of a nursing workforce that can adapt to the population's changing health care needs and provide the highest quality of care for all.⁹

These examples illustrate the advantage these crucial programs have in recruiting and retaining nurses in the communities they serve, including rural areas. These programs directly connect patients with high-quality nursing care in community health centers, hospitals, long-term care facilities, local and state health departments, schools, workplaces, and patients' homes. With

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024). Occupational Outlook Handbook- Registered Nurses. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm>

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024). Occupational Outlook Handbook- Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Midwives, and Nurse Practitioners. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/nurse-anesthetists-nurse-midwives-and-nurse-practitioners.htm>

⁵ National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2024). Results of the 2024 National Nursing Workforce Study. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncsbn.org/workforce> (full journal article available at: [https://www.journalofnursingregulation.com/article/S2155-8256\(25\)00047-X/fulltext](https://www.journalofnursingregulation.com/article/S2155-8256(25)00047-X/fulltext))

⁶ Health Resources and Services Administration. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Justification. Pages 143-146. Retrieved from: <https://web.archive.org/web/20250308124649/https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/about/budget/budget-justification-fy2025.pdf>

⁷ Ibid, Pages 157-161.

⁸ Ibid, Pages 154-156.

⁹ Ibid, Pages 151-153.

more than five million nurses throughout the country,¹⁰ and additional demand for more nurses to serve our communities, Title VIII programs are a strategic investment that need increased support in FY 2026.

Advancing Health Innovation Through Nursing Science and Research:

We have also seen the importance of science in the discussion of cures, patient safety, and preparedness. As the only Institute or Center at NIH that directly supports research by nurse scientists, NINR promotes patient-centered care across the life continuum. Since nursing research was established as an independent entity within NIH, NINR has continued developing and testing community-based models, particularly in rural and underserved areas. It is through the substantial work of nurse researchers and scientists that we have seen:

- Prevention and care for low birthweight infants, which, “improved the infant’s environment, was safe and effective, and ‘saved approximately \$18,560 per infant in hospital and physician costs.’”¹¹
- Symptom management for those with Alzheimer’s “—including a ‘remarkable series of genetic discoveries’—contributed to ‘major advances’ in understanding the disease.”¹²
- Development of the Braden Scale to reduce pressure sores, a condition that impacts millions and adds an estimated “\$9 billion in annual health care costs.”¹³
- End-of-life research that helped elders both to develop an advance directive and maintain a continuity of care, thereby ‘increasing the likelihood’ that their wishes would be followed.¹⁴
- Research documenting that adequate nursing staffing models lead to a positive work environment, lower staff turnover and burnout, and increase patient safety and satisfaction.¹⁵

The innovative research by our nation’s nurses and scientists directly shapes nursing education, supports faculty and nursing schools, and is essential to developing new evidence-based practices to care for all patients. Through increased investments in NINR, and retaining NINR as an independent Institute, nurse researchers and scientists will be able to continue their invaluable work at the forefront of chronic disease prevention, patient care, and recovery.

As Congress works to pass a bipartisan FY 2026 LHHS-ED funding bill, and support America’s health, we urge you to **invest in our nation’s nurses by providing at least \$303.472 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and at least \$197.693 million for NINR.** If our organizations can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please contact the

¹⁰ National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2025). Active RN Licenses: A profile of nursing licensure in the U.S. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncsbn.org/nursing-regulation/national-nursing-database/licensure-statistics/active-rn-licenses.page>

¹¹ Cantelon, Philip L. PhD. National Institute of Nursing Research, NINR, Bringing Science to Life. (September 2010). Page 87. Retrieved from: https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR_History_Book_508.pdf

¹² Ibid, Pages 180-185.

¹³ The National Institute of Nursing Research, Changing Practice, Changing Lives: 10 Landmark Nursing Research Studies. Page 5. Retrieved from: <https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/docs/10-landmark-nursing-research-studies.pdf>

¹⁴ Cantelon, Philip L. PhD. National Institute of Nursing Research, NINR, Bringing Science to Life. (September 2010). Page 194. Retrieved from: https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR_History_Book_508.pdf

¹⁵ The National Institute of Nursing Research, Changing Practice, Changing Lives: 10 Landmark Nursing Research Studies. Pages 3-4. Retrieved from: <https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/docs/10-landmark-nursing-research-studies.pdf>

Nursing Community Coalition's Executive Director, Rachel Minahan at rstevenson@thenursingcommunity.org.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
Academy of Neonatal Nursing
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Heart Failure Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
American Association of Post-Acute Care Nursing
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Nurses Association
American Nursing Informatics Association
American Organization for Nursing Leadership
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc.
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association of Public Health Nurses
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Association of Forensic Nurses
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Hispanic Nurses

National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Nurses Association
National Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers
National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence
National League for Nursing
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Society of Pediatric Nurses
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society

cc:

All Members of the Senate and House Committee on Appropriations