



November 9, 2011

The Honorable Dennis Rehberg  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee  
Labor, HHS-ED and Related Agencies  
2358B Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee  
Labor, HHS-ED and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
Labor, HHS-ED and Related Agencies  
731 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
Labor, HHS-ED and Related Agencies  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Rehberg, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Harkin, and Ranking Member Shelby:

On behalf of the Nursing Community, a forum of professional nursing organizations representing over 850,000 Registered Nurses (RNs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), the 47 undersigned organizations respectfully request at *least level funding* for the Nursing Workforce Development programs, authorized under Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.), in FY 2012. This level of \$242.387 million, provided in FY 2011 and passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee in their FY 2012 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education (LHHS-ED) and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, is necessary to address the demand for nurses across the country. Fully understanding the critical economic concerns facing the nation, Congress must still consider long-term financial planning for nursing education and research. Not doing so would place the health of our nation in jeopardy.

The need for a continued investment in the nursing workforce remains critical as the demand for highly educated RNs and APRNs is projected to increase exponentially in the coming years. Workforce analysts with the Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that more than 581,500 new RN positions will be created through 2018, which would increase the size of the RN workforce by 22%. Employment of RNs is expected to grow much faster than average when compared to all other professions. In the face of an aging Baby Boomer population, a retiring nursing workforce, and expanding access to health services, demand for nursing care is growing dramatically.

While the nursing profession provides a viable career choice now and into the future, Americans interested in pursuing this academic path enter an excessively competitive

application process. According to American Association of Colleges of Nursing's 2010-2011 annual survey, U.S. nursing schools turned away 67,563 *qualified* applications to baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs in 2010 due to insufficient numbers of faculty, clinical sites, classroom space, and clinical preceptors, as well as budget constraints. Schools of nursing across the country work each year to meet the demand for enrollment, but the nursing faculty shortage and budget limitations are preventing the sustainability of our nation's nursing education infrastructure and the pipeline of future nurses.

The Title VIII programs are a proven solution to addressing nursing workforce demands. By supporting the education, practice, retention, and recruitment of the nursing workforce, the programs help ensure RNs and APRNs are available to practice in rural and medically underserved communities. The programs also support Nurse-Managed Health Clinics that offer not only primary care services, but are unique interdisciplinary training sites for many different types of healthcare providers. It is clear that the demand for the Title VIII programs is tremendous, particularly for the Nurse Education Loan Repayment and Nursing Scholarship programs. In FY 2010, of the 6,978 applications received for the Nursing Education Loan Repayment program, only 18% were funded and only 7% of the applications received for the Nursing Scholarship program were awarded to nursing students. Many of today's nursing students depend on federal loans like the Title VIII programs to complete their degrees and offset their considerable educational expenses.

The Title VIII programs also support the education of future nurse faculty. As indicated, tens of thousands of potential students are turned away from nursing programs primarily due to a national faculty shortage. A total of 1,088 vacant positions were recently reported in AACN's *Special Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions for Academic Year 2011-2012*, a 24% increase compared to last year. The Nurse Faculty Loan program, authorized under Title VIII, provides reimbursement of educational loans in exchange for the student's commitment to teach for four years after graduation.

Additionally, we request that you consider the maximum amount of funding possible for the National Institutes of Health while maintaining a balanced commitment to other critical health and research programs as the LHHS-ED Appropriations process continues. As one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) supports basic and clinical research that examines health and illness across the lifespan and establishes the scientific basis for quality patient care.

The Nursing Community appreciates your continued support of Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and urges you to provide at least the FY 2011 funding level as you advance a final FY 2012 LHHS-ED Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of our requests for Title VIII and the NINR in FY 2012.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses  
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Assembly for Men in Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses

American Association of Nurse Anesthetists  
American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordination  
American College of Nurse Practitioners  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American Holistic Nurses Association  
American Nephrology Nurses' Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Organization of Nurse Executives  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
American Society for Pain Management Nursing  
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses  
Asian American and Pacific Islander Nurses Association  
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators  
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Dermatology Nurses' Association  
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
Infusion Nurses Society  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
International Nurses Society on Addictions  
International Society of Nurses in Genetics  
International Society of Psychiatric Nursing  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
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 Black Nurses Association  
National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Associations  
National Gerontological Nursing Association  
National Nursing Centers Consortium  
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Public Health Nursing Section, American Public Health Association  
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates  
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society