

July 9, 2009

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Representative Tiahrt:

As you begin your consideration of the FY 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations, the undersigned members of the ANSR (Americans for Nursing Shortage Relief) Alliance urge you to support the President's overall budget proposal of **\$263.4 million** for the ***Title VIII – Nursing Workforce Development Programs of the Public Health Service Act***. **The Alliance also requests funding of the Advanced Education Nursing program (Sec. 811) at an increased level on par with the other Title VIII programs.**

The Title VIII programs, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), provide the main federal funding for nursing education, practice, and retention, aimed at maintaining an adequate supply of nurses to attain the nation's goal of ensuring access to affordable, high-quality health care, particularly for the country's vulnerable populations. However, today's shortage of appropriately prepared nurses – although eased somewhat in various locales during today's recession – is outpacing the current level of federal investments in Title VIII programs.

In March 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported continued growth in the health care sector, despite the nation's economic downturn with unemployment reaching 8.1% in February 2009. With that month's job-loss of 681,000 realized in nearly all major industries, BLS also reported the addition of 27,000 new jobs, mostly filled by nurses, at hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other ambulatory care settings. Absent sufficient support to remedy the shortfall, the workforce deficit also will continue to aggravate nurse faculty scarcities throughout the education infrastructure, preventing too few eligible people from entering the profession at the rate the nation requires to meet our mounting health care needs.

The link between health care and our nation's economic security and global competitiveness is undeniable. Having a sufficient nursing workforce to meet the demands of a highly diverse and aging population is an essential component to reforming the health care system as well as improving the health status of the nation and reducing health care costs.

The Alliance represents a diverse cross-section of health care and other related organizations, health care providers, and supporters of nursing issues that have united to address the national nursing

shortage. We stand ready to work with the 111th Congress to advance programs and policies that will ensure that our nation has a sufficient and adequately prepared nursing workforce to provide quality care to all well into the 21st century.

Sincerely yours,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators
American Association of Nurse Executives
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
American College of Nurse Practitioners
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
American Society of Plastic Surgical Nurses
Association for Radiologic & Imaging Nursing
Association of Pediatric Hematology/
Oncology Nurses
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses
Developmental Disabilities Nurses Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Society of Nurses in Genetics, Inc.
Legislative Coalition of Virginia Nurses
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Neonatal Nurses

National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Nurse Massage Therapists
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Registered Nurse First Assistants
National Black Nurses Association
National Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Council of Women's Organizations
National Gerontological Nursing Association
National League for Nursing
National Nursing Centers Consortium
National Nursing Staff Development Organization
National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society
RN First Assistants Policy & Advocacy Coalition
Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc.
Society of Pediatric Nurses
Society of Trauma Nurses
Women's Research & Education Institute
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society