

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2010

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

We respectfully request that the Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act) receive \$267.3 million in appropriations for FY 2011.

The vision for a reformed health system that will increase access to quality care and decrease cost must include a significant investment in our healthcare workforce, particularly nurses. Registered Nurses (RNs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) are key providers whose care is linked directly to the availability, cost, and quality of healthcare services. Yet, the continuing shortage of nurses will significantly hinder the nation's healthcare reform goals.

Nurses and nursing students across the country benefited from the significant increase your Subcommittee provided these programs in FY 2010. The nurses you helped to support have career aspirations to work in rural and underserved areas, which ensure these communities have access to quality nursing care. Additionally, your Subcommittee's support of future nurse faculty members will make an impact on nursing school capacity. However, the U.S. nursing shortage is projected to grow to 260,000 RNs by 2025. A shortage of this magnitude would be twice as large as any nursing shortage experienced in this country since the mid-1960s. Sustaining and increasing the investment in the Title VIII programs will help address the demand for professional nurses.

We hope that the Subcommittee will consider investing this increase in the Advanced Education Nursing, Nursing Workforce Diversity, Comprehensive Geriatric Education, and Nurse Education, Practice, and Retention programs, which help complement the Loan Repayment and Scholarship Programs, and expand nursing school capacity as well as increase patient access to care. These specific Title VIII programs have not kept pace with inflation since FY 2005.

Title VIII is a critical pipeline program and will help ensure:

- There are more nurses to address the projected demand for RNs
- Faculty are prepared to educate the next generation of nurses,
- There are more APRNs who offer essential primary care and specialty services,
- There is a more diverse nursing workforce,
- Nursing education and practice is informed by evidence-based knowledge, and

- Nurses are educated to provide care for our nation's aging population.

Your support for \$267.3 million in FY 2011 funding for Nursing Workforce Development programs will make a real difference in the lives of healthcare consumers, nurses, and the faculty committed to educating the nursing workforce's next generation.

Sincerely,

Lois Capps

Cole E. Cadden

John P. Ort

Don Young

Rick Boucher

Earl Blumenauer

Harold L. Berenson

Chris Smith

Jon Schatz
Marianne Waters

John LaBonde

Vernon E. Ehlers

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