



December 5, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
United States Senate
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
United States House of Representative
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
United States Senate
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
United States House of Representative
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Lowey, Vice Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of all 63 member organizations of the Nursing Community Coalition, and as you continue the appropriation process, we respectfully request **at least \$259.472 million, or up to \$279.472 million, for existing Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs**, which is aligned with the House-passed Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (LHHS-ED) appropriations bill and **at least \$172.417 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR, National Institutes of Health)** as outlined in the Senate-proposed LHHS-ED appropriations bill in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. As the demand for high-quality health care continues to grow, an increased investment in the nation's largest healthcare workforce, nursing, is imperative.

The Nursing Community Coalition represents the cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the nursing profession, and is committed to advancing the health of our nation through the nursing lens. As the largest segment of the healthcare workforce, there are over four million licensed Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), and nursing students who are involved at every point of health care nationwide. It is this steadfast commitment to funding Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and NINR that propels progress in ensuring communities across the country have access to nursing care.

In fact, the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration, have been instrumental in bolstering and sustaining the nation's nursing pipeline for over 50 years. Title VIII programs address all aspects of the nursing workforce demand, including education, practice, recruitment, retention, and most important, increasing access to care to communities that need it most, including those in rural and underserved areas.

Ensuring that these Title VIII programs continue to receive the full appropriated amount is essential. One technical issue that we wish to flag, and seek correction, as you work on a final package, is qualifying language related to the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) and the Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP). Specifically, in FY 2019, the bill stated, “Provided further, That, ***in addition to*** amounts otherwise made available in the previous proviso, \$15,000,000 shall remain available until expended for the purposes of making payments under the NHSC Loan Repayment Program under section 338B of the PHS Act...”¹

Contrary to Congressional intent, due to the “***in addition to***” phrasing, the HHS Secretary elected to “transfer” \$15 million from Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs, specifically the NFLP. As a result, this essential Title VIII program only received \$13.5 million in FY 2019, despite receiving a \$28.5 million appropriation. This unintended reduction to NFLP is deeply impactful to nursing students, future faculty, the nursing profession, and their communities. We therefore, respectfully request that the final bill utilize the corrected language included in the FY 2020 House-passed LHHS-ED bill, “Provided further, That, ***within*** the amount made available in the previous proviso, \$15,000,000 shall remain available until expended for the purposes of making payments under the NHSC Loan Repayment Program under section 338B of the PHS Act...”² This correction will have a major impact on the future nursing workforce.

Equally as integral to advancing the health of individuals, families, and communities is funding of NINR. As one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at the National Institutes of Health, NINR’s research projects are aimed at reducing burdensome chronic illness, improving end of life care, and promoting patient-centered care across the life continuum. From disease prevention and global health, to precision medicine and genomic studies, NINR is at the forefront of nursing science and research.

Again, we urge you to continue your strong support by providing at least \$259.472 million, or up to \$279.472 million, for existing Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and at least \$172.417 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research in FY 2020. If our organizations can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please contact the Nursing Community Coalition’s Executive Director, Rachel Stevenson, at rstenvenson@thenursingcommunity.org or at 202-463-6930, ext. 271.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
Academy of Neonatal Nursing
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

¹ H.R.6157 - Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019, Public Law No: 115-245. Page 89. Retrieved from: <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ245/PLAW-115publ245.pdf>

² H.R. 2740, Making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes. Page 44. Retrieved from: <https://appropriations.house.gov/sites/democrats.appropriations.house.gov/files/FY2020%20LHHS%20Filed%20Bill%20-%20HR2740.pdf>

American Association of Heart Failure Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
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 Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association for Radiologic and Imaging Nursing
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
Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Incorporated
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 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:

Senator Roy Blunt
Senator Patty Murray
Representative Rosa DeLauro
Representative Tom Cole