



July 18, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Shelby, and Vice Chair Leahy:

The 55 undersigned members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) write to restate the coalition's recommendation of \$690 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs for fiscal year 2019. We are disappointed to see the proposed elimination of the **Health Career Opportunity Program (HCOP)** and the \$8 million cut to the **Advanced Education Nursing** in the House Labor-HHS-Education spending bill. We appreciate the recent investments by both the House and Senate over the last few years and hope that the \$4.5 million reduction in total spending for **Mental and Behavioral Health** programs in the House Labor-HHS-Education spending bill can be restored to help support a robust workforce. We also thank the Senate Appropriations Committee for increasing funding to Area Health Education Centers by \$2 million and urge the House to at least adopt the funding levels proposed by Senate Appropriators.

HPNEC is an alliance of national organizations representing schools, programs, health professionals, and students dedicated to ensuring the health care workforce is trained to meet the needs of our diverse population. Title VII and Title VIII help shape the workforce in targeted ways, such as promoting inter-professional, team-based care; encouraging practice in community-based settings as well as rural and other underserved areas; and training providers to respond to emerging public health threats.

Specifically, the Title VII HCOP pipeline program helps ensure a culturally competent workforce to meet the needs of our growing and increasingly diverse population. National HCOP academies encourage more than 10,000 students annually to pursue a career in the health professions. Students from diverse backgrounds including underrepresented minorities, veterans, and other economically or educationally disadvantaged students who want to become health professionals are supported by this program.

Likewise, cuts to Advanced Education Nursing (AEN) programs, are counterproductive, especially as the nation's demand for healthcare rises. AEN grants provide the opportunity to innovate so that advanced practice registered nurses, nurse educators and other nurses requiring a master's or doctoral degree through traineeships, can meet the health care needs our communities are facing today and in the future. Of the graduating students in academic year 2016-2017 who received the programs traineeship dollars, over 50% reported they planned to pursue employment in medically underserved areas.

As we face nationwide health professional shortages, it is crucial that we enhance the federal commitment to the programs that help the next generation of providers stay ahead of the increasing health care challenges of our country. While HPNEC recognizes the difficulty you face in the constrained budget environment, we urge you to ensure the U.S. health workforce is equipped to address the nation's health care complexities by providing \$690 million for Titles VII and VIII in FY 2019.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of PAs
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association
American Dental Hygienists' Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Medical Student Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Pediatric Society
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Chiropractic Colleges
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs

Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
College of Psychiatric & Neurologic Pharmacists
Council on Social Work Education
Eldercare Workforce Alliance
Emergency Nurses Association
Health Professions Network
HIV Medicine Association
International Certificate and Reciprocity Consortium
National AHEC Organization
National Association for Geriatric Education
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions
National Hispanic Medical Association
National League for Nursing
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
Pediatric Policy Council
Physician Assistant Education Association
Society for Pediatric Research
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine