



June 6, 2006

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula:

The undersigned organizations write to urge you to restore funding to the Title VII health professions programs to at least the FY 2005 level of \$300 million, and to provide an increase for the Title VIII nursing programs in FY 2007 to \$175 million.

The president's proposed FY 2007 budget eliminates funding for the Title VII health professions programs, with the exception of \$10 million for scholarships for disadvantaged students. The proposed eliminations are in addition to a 51.5 percent cut (\$154.4 million) to the programs in the final federal budget for the current fiscal year (FY 2006), including the elimination of geriatrics, rural training, and workforce information and analysis programs.

Title VII and VIII programs train providers with the skills to care for special needs populations and are the only federal programs designed to increase minority representation in the health care workforce. At a time when researchers predict imminent shortages across health professions disciplines, these programs are essential as they help increase the supply and distribution of primary care and other providers. As community health centers report significant provider recruitment difficulties, Title VII and VIII programs are needed to train health professionals who are more likely to serve in underserved communities and settings.

While we understand there are many competing priorities in the fiscal year 2007 bill, we fear that the enacted and proposed cuts to the health professions programs will exacerbate current and future health care challenges and will impact our nation's most vulnerable communities. We urge you to restore funding to the Title VII health professions programs to at least the FY 2005 level of \$300 million, and to provide an increase to the Title VIII nursing programs during consideration of the FY 2007 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to ensure the continuation of congressional support for these critical programs.

Sincerely,

Advocate Health Care
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine
Ambulatory Pediatric Association
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physician Assistants
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Nurses Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Pediatric Society
American Physical Therapy Association
American Psychological Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Chiropractic Colleges
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of Professors of Medicine
Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions
Association of University Programs in Health Administration
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Clerkship Directors in Internal Medicine
Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools
HIV Medicine Association
National Area Health Education Centers Organization
National Association for Geriatric Education
National Association for Geriatric Education Centers
National Association of Medical Minority Educators, Inc.
National Hispanic Medical Association
National League for Nursing
National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges
Society for Adolescent Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society of General Internal Medicine