



June 18, 2004

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 2003 level of \$308 million and provide an increase for the Title VIII nursing programs in FY 2005.

The president's proposed FY 2005 budget eliminates most of the funding for the Title VII health professions programs, by providing just \$11 million for these programs, a 96 percent cut below the current year. These are the only federal programs designed to train providers in interdisciplinary settings to meet the needs of special and underserved populations, as well as increase minority representation in the health care workforce.

The programs help address the geographic maldistribution of providers by training them to deliver care in underserved areas, including rural and inner-city communities. Reports state that the graduates of these programs are up to 10 times more likely to practice in medically underserved areas than graduates of non-funded programs, and at times, they serve as the only source of health care in many disadvantaged communities. Any decreases to these programs would hamper their ability to continue to prepare an array of health professionals to help fill the health care delivery gaps across the country.

We understand that there are many competing priorities in your fiscal year 2005 bill; however, sustaining these programs' funding is essential to maintaining the training infrastructures in health professions schools nationwide. We urge you to restore funding to the Title VII health professions programs to at least the FY 2003 level of \$308 million and provide an increase to the Title VIII nursing programs during consideration of the FY 2005 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,

Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine
Ambulatory Pediatric Association
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physician Assistants
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
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 Students Association
American Nurses Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Pediatric Society
American Psychological Association
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
American Society for Clinical Pathology
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Practice Residency Directors
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 Teachers of Preventive Medicine
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Clerkship Directors in Internal Medicine
Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools, Inc.
HIV Medicine Association
NAADAC - The Association for Addiction Professionals
National AHEC Organization
National Association of Social Workers
National Hispanic Medical Association
National League for Nursing
National Rural Health Association
North American Primary Care Research Group
Society for Adolescent Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine