



June 23, 2008

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Specter:

The undersigned organizations write to urge you to fund fully the health professions education programs by providing at least \$300 million for Title VII health professions programs and \$200 million for Title VIII nursing workforce development programs in the FY 2009 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. These appropriations levels are needed if these programs are to fulfill their shared mission of improving the supply, distribution, and diversity of health professionals nationwide.

In FY 2006, funding for the Title VII programs was drastically reduced by 51 percent, causing programs across the nation to cease their activities. Despite increases for some programs in the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act, all Title VII programs remain below their FY 2005 funding levels. Unfortunately, the President's FY 2009 Budget proposes eliminating Title VII in its entirety and cutting Title VIII. As you know, an April 4 letter led by Senators Jack Reed and Pat Roberts was signed by 49 Senators requesting a restoration of Title VII funds. In addition, a letter led by Senators Barbara Mikulski and Susan Collins and signed by 52 Senators highlighted the importance of support for Title VIII.

While we understand there are many competing priorities in the FY 2009 bill, it is essential that Congress reverse the enacted cuts to the health professions programs to help resolve systemic workforce shortages and deliver care to our nation's most vulnerable communities. Supporting the Title VII and VIII programs is an investment in the health professions workforce and the health of the nation. Despite the administration's claim that the programs are ineffective, according to the HRSA budget justification for FY 2009, the programs are exceeding their targets for the percent of underrepresented minority and/or disadvantaged participants, the proportion of participants training in medically underserved communities, and percentage of health professionals entering practice in underserved areas. We urge you to reverse the devastating cuts from FY 2006, by fully funding the Title VII and VIII programs in the FY 2009 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill.

Your support is greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with you to ensure the continuation of congressional support for these critical programs that are necessary to preserving the health and well-being of the American people.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
Academy of General Dentistry  
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
American Academy of Anesthesiologists Assistants  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners  
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 Colleges of Podiatric Medicine  
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists  
American College of Nurse Practitioners  
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
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 Music Therapy Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Podiatric Medical Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science  
American Society for Clinical Pathology  
American Society of Radiologic Technologists  
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research  
Association of Academic Health Centers  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of American Veterinary Medical 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 Professors of Medicine  
Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine  
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses  
Clerkship Directors in Internal Medicine  
Health Professions Network  
National Area Health Education Centers Organization  
National Association for Geriatric Education  
National Association of Geriatric Education Centers  
National Association of Medical Minority Educators, Inc.  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National League for Nursing  
National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges  
National Rural Health Association  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine