



July 10, 2006

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

Dear Chairman 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 \$175 million for Title VIII nursing programs in the FY 2007 budget. These appropriations levels restore funding lost as a result of the devastating 51.5 percent cut (\$154.4 million) to Title VII in FY 2006, and provide vital support for the programs to fulfill their shared mission of improving the supply, distribution, and diversity of health professionals nationwide.

The Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill (H.R. 5647) passed by the House Appropriations Committee does not restore cuts enacted in FY 2006. While it reinstates funding to the geriatrics training programs, the bill maintains the substantial cuts to primary care and diversity programs, and the elimination of the rural training and workforce information and analysis programs. Further, the bill eliminates public health, preventive medicine, and dental public health programs, as well as the Health Careers Opportunity Program, a pipeline program that recruits minority and disadvantaged students into the health professions.

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 the devastating cuts from FY 2006, by fully funding the Title VII and VIII programs in 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,

Administrators of Internal Medicine
Advocate Health Care
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine
Ambulatory Pediatric Association
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of HIV Medicine
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 Community Colleges
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Education Association
American Nephrology Nurses' Association
American Nurses Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Pediatric Society
American Psychological Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society of Radiologic Technologists
Association of Academic Health Centers
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 Professors of Medicine
Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions
Association of Specialty Professors
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 Association of Social Workers
National Hispanic Medical Association
National League for Nursing
National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
Society for Adolescent Medicine
Society for Pediatrics Research
Society for Public Health Education
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine