



September 19, 2011

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Shelby:

The 45 undersigned members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) write to urge full funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Title VII and Title VIII programs in the FY 2012 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill. HPNEC supports a commitment to the programs commensurate with the need identified in HRSA's FY 2012 Congressional Budget Justification for \$762.5 million to help mitigate provider shortages across health professions disciplines.

The Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing education programs are the only federal programs that specifically address some of the nation's most pressing health care workforce concerns (such as primary care), help meet the needs of special and underserved populations, and help improve the diversity of the nation's health care workforce. Since 1963, the programs have helped prepare the health care workforce to respond to the country's evolving needs. For example, in recognition of the increasingly team-based nature of health care, the programs facilitate education and training opportunities for a wide range of health professionals in interdisciplinary settings. Similarly, the programs equip tomorrow's health care workforce to care for the country's growing, aging population, and help fill other gaps in the supply of health professionals not met by traditional market forces.

Through student loans, loan guarantees, and scholarships to students, and grants and contracts to institutions, the Title VII and VIII programs seek to enhance health care services in rural and underserved areas and guide aspiring and practicing health professionals to communities and careers where vacancies persist. The programs remain a critical element of the nation's health care safety net and will continue to strengthen the workforce as more individuals seek access to health care services.

While we recognize the difficult decisions Congress faces in securing the nation's fiscal stability, we urge you to prioritize the nation's health care workforce needs with \$762.5 million for the Title VII and Title VIII programs in FY 2012. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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 College of Nurse Practitioners
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Education Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Nurses Association
American Podiatric Medical Association
American Psychological 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 Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Community-Campus Partnerships for Health
Council on Social Work Education
National AHEC Organization
National Association of Medical Minority Educators
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
National Rural Health Association
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
Physician Assistant Education Association
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
Student National Medical Association