March 13, 2020

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
House Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you begin work on the fiscal year (FY) 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we respectfully urge you to support the nation's health care workforce by including $512 million for Title VII health professions education and training programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Title VII programs are essential federal programs designed to fill gaps in the supply of health professionals, respond to the needs of special and underserved populations, and increase minority representation in the health care workforce. While we understand that the Committee is faced with difficult choices to ensure fiscal responsibility, we urge you to consider the positive impact that Title VII funding has on health care workforce training and development across the United States, as well as its value to the business community, which relies on these programs for a skilled workforce.

Title VII programs have a longstanding history of helping the nation's health care workforce adapt to its changing medical needs. These programs improve access to, and quality of, care for vulnerable populations — including children and families living on low incomes and in rural and underserved communities. Title VII programs play an essential role in improving the diversity of the health care workforce, and they fortify our nation’s primary care, geriatric, physician assistant, oral health, and preventive medicine workforce by training future clinicians, teachers, and researchers in these much-needed specialties.

In addition, as we face ever-changing public health threats impacting patients across the country, continued investment in Titles VII programs is essential to addressing the health challenges of today and the future. For example, some Title VII grantees provide chronic care management for seniors while others provide education and training in Alzheimer's disease. Additionally, these programs are working to address the mental health gaps in our nation's health care system by developing and training the next generation of behavioral health providers and social workers, who are addressing the opioid epidemic as well as patients living with substance use disorder.
At a time when the country is facing unprecedented provider shortages, as well as a rapidly growing and aging population, it is necessary to continue our strong commitment to programs that advance our health care workforce such as:

- Area Health Education Centers (AHEC),
- Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training,
- Centers of Excellence (COE),
- Clinical Training in Interprofessional Practice,
- Faculty Loan Repayment,
- Geriatrics Training,
- Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP),
- Mental and Behavioral Health,
- Medical Student Education grants,
- Oral Health Training,
- Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment,
- Primary Care Medicine,
- Public Health and Preventive Medicine,
- Rural Physician Training Grants,
- Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS),
- Teaching Health Center (THC) Planning Grants, and
- Workforce Information and Analysis.

These education and training programs guide current and aspiring health professionals to high demand careers. Support for these programs will ensure that the distribution, quality, and diversity of our nation's health professions workforce continues to improve and that the workforce is prepared to meet the country's evolving and emerging health care needs.

We respectfully urge you to make the nation's next generation of health professionals a priority with a strong investment in Title VII programs in the FY 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress

Michael C. Burgess, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress
G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
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Jahana Hayes
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Jason Crow
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Jerry McNerney
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Jimmy Gomez
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Joe Neguse
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John B. Larson
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William R. Keating  
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