December 6, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Leahy, Chair DeLauro, Vice Chair Shelby, and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC), we urge Congress to provide at least the higher of the two funding levels from the draft House and Senate Labor-HHS-Ed spending bill for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs for fiscal year (FY) 2023. Providing the higher of the two levels is an essential first step in achieving HPNEC’s recommendation of providing $1.51 billion for the Titles VII and VIII programs.

HPNEC is an alliance of over 90 national organizations representing schools, programs, health professionals, and students dedicated to training our nation's health care workforce to meet the needs of our population. Together, the members of HPNEC advocate for continued support for the health professions and nursing workforce development programs authorized under Titles VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act and administered by HRSA.

HPNEC also urges members to finalize the FY 2023 spending packages as soon as possible and avoid additional continuing resolutions. We remain concerned that current funding levels for the chronically underfunded HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs will hinder our nation's ability to educate current and future providers to serve the needs of all patients.

The COVID-19 pandemic demanded a lot of our health workforce and learners, leaving many burned out and exhausted. We are grateful for the Committees’ proposed funding for the new Preventing Burnout in the Health Workforce program, authorized by the Lorna Breen Health
Care Provider Protection Act (P.L. 117-105). With a flu epidemic, RSV, and an impending winter COVID-19 surge, it is imperative to equip our health workforce with the support they need.

The HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs have proven successful in recruiting, training, and supporting mental health providers, nurses, public health practitioners, geriatricians, and other front-line health care workers critical to addressing COVID-19. In addition, many of these programs target participants from diverse, economically disadvantaged, and rural backgrounds. Establishing a health workforce with providers from these backgrounds improves patients' access to care and satisfaction and enhances health professions learning environments.

Additionally, we need to make sure that our health care system meets the ever-changing needs of patients across the country. Through developing new curriculum to address emerging public health crises, such as substance use disorders, or collaborating with community leaders in educating providers to deliver culturally competent care, to utilizing telehealth as a way to connect with patients, the Title VII and Title VIII programs help ensure our health workforce is at the forefront of new health care delivery systems and models of care.

Congress must increase investment in the Title VII and Title VIII programs to combat pervasive health inequities as seen in the COVID-19 pandemic and to prepare the health workforce for the health care demands of tomorrow. To that end, HPNEC urges you to provide at least the higher of the two proposed funding amounts for Titles VII and VIII in FY 2023 to ensure our health workforce meets the needs of all patients.

If you have any questions, please contact do not hesitate to contact me or Katherine Cruz at k cruz@aamc.org.

Sincerely,

Matthew Shick
Executive Director

CC: Congressional Leadership
Members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition

Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health
Academic Pediatric Association
Allergy & Asthma Network
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM)
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
American Academy of PAs
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Dental Research
American Association of Chairs of Departments of Psychiatry
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 Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists
American College of Cardiology
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association
American Dental Hygienists’ Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Geriatrics Society
American Medical Student Association
American Medical Women's Association
American Music Therapy Association
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Pediatric Society
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM)
American Surgical Association
America's Essential Hospitals
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
Association of American Indian Physicians
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology
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 Pathology Chairs
Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology
CAEAR Coalition
Council of Graduate Schools
Council on Social Work Education
Eldercare Workforce Alliance
Health Professions Network
Heart Failure Society of America
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA)
HIV Medicine Association
Latino Medical Student Association
National AHEC Organization
National Association for Geriatric Education
National Association of Community Health Centers
National Association of Geriatric Education Centers
National Association of Nurse Practitioner's in Women's Health (NPWH)
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Athletic Trainers' Association
National Council for Diversity in Health Professions
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Hispanic Medical Association
National League for Nursing
National Medical Association
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
Pediatric Policy Council
Physician Assistant Education Association
Pre-Health Dreamers
Society for Pediatric Research
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
Student National Medical Association (SNMA)