

**Statement by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) on  
FY 2026 Appropriations for Programs in the Department of Health and Human Services  
Submitted for the Record to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education and Related Agencies – June 13, 2025**

The AAMC is a nonprofit association dedicated to improving the health of people everywhere through medical education, health care, medical research, and community collaborations. For FY 2026, the AAMC recommends the following for federal priorities essential in assisting medical schools and teaching hospitals and health systems to fulfill their missions that benefit patients, communities, and the nation: at least \$51.3 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), in addition to any funding for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H); \$500 million for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ); \$1.51 billion for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs; \$778 million for the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program; and at least \$11.581 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

AAMC's members are all 160 U.S. medical schools accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education; 12 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 500 academic health systems and teaching hospitals, including Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and more than 70 academic societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC leads and serves America's medical schools, academic health systems and teaching hospitals, and the millions of individuals across academic medicine, including more than 210,000 full-time faculty members, 99,000 medical students, 162,000 resident physicians, and 60,000 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the biomedical sciences. Through the Alliance of Academic Health Centers International, AAMC membership reaches more than 60 international academic health centers throughout five regional offices across the globe.

The AAMC is aware of ongoing efforts to restructure and reform HHS and its subagencies which may have impacts on programs and priorities vital to the missions of medical schools and teaching hospitals and health systems. As part of the HHS reorganization, critical leaders were laid off, reassigned, or placed on administrative leave. Federal funding disruptions also are affecting research, education, health care, and public health programs nationwide. These actions are likely to slow scientific advancement and negatively impact the health and well-being of the American people. As the nation faces critical health challenges – and the potential for life-saving medical advancements is based on federally supported research – the AAMC remains committed to and ready to work with the leadership of HHS in our mission to improve the health of all patients, families, and communities. We continue to be steadfast in our commitment to advancing medical research that leads to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and cures for patients and communities; ensuring access to high-quality care; and building and strengthening a physician and biomedical research workforce that reflects the needs of all Americans. The AAMC urges Congress to thoughtfully consider proposed HHS restructuring efforts.

We also recognize that even in the absence of formal restructuring, many of the Administration's budget proposals for FY 2026 would have concerning consequences. The AAMC, in response to the May 2 release of the preliminary FY 2026 president's budget request, [issued a statement](#) noting that enacting the budget proposal "would yield to cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and other health threats facing Americans by dismantling federal support for medical research, public health, and health professions education that keeps the country healthy. Retreating on health issues where we have

made progress and where so many depend on their government to offer promising cures is not the American way.” As the White House has released the full budget request and additional agency-specific details, we remain concerned with the impact the proposals would have on communities nationwide.

To enable the necessary support for the broad range of critical federal priorities, the AAMC urges Congress to approve a funding allocation for discretionary spending, and, particularly, the Labor-HHS Subcommittee, that enables full investment in the priorities outlined below.

**National Institutes of Health.** Congress’s longstanding bipartisan support for medical research has contributed greatly to improving the health and well-being of all. The foundation of knowledge built through NIH-funded research drives medical innovation that improves health through new and better diagnostics, improved prevention strategies, and more effective treatments. Over half of the life-saving research supported by the NIH takes place at [medical schools and teaching hospitals](#), where scientists, clinicians, fellows, residents, medical students, and trainees work together to improve the lives of Americans through research. This unique and highly productive relationship lays the foundation for improved health and quality of life and strengthens the nation’s long-term economy.

In FY 2026, the AAMC joins more than 500 partners in supporting the [Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research recommendation](#) that Congress provide at least \$51.3 billion for NIH’s foundational work, which would represent an increase of \$4.2 billion over the comparable FY 2024 funding level. This funding level would allow NIH’s base budget to keep pace with the biomedical research and development price index (BRDPI) and allow meaningful growth of roughly 6% above inflation. Importantly, the Ad Hoc Group urges lawmakers to ensure that any additional funding the Subcommittee opts to provide for ARPA-H supplements our \$51.3 billion recommendation for NIH’s base budget, rather than supplants the essential foundational investment in the NIH. Securing a reliable, robust budget trajectory without disruptions is key in positioning the agency – and the patients who rely on the research it funds – to capitalize on the full range of research in the biomedical, behavioral, social, and population-based sciences. We must continue to strengthen our nation’s research capacity, solidify our global leadership in research, ensure a robust and diverse research workforce, and inspire a passion for science in current and future generations of researchers. Additionally, the AAMC urges Congress to reaffirm the decades of bipartisan support for investment in biomedical research funding by NIH that has saved the countless lives, provided hope to patients, their families, and communities, and has made the United States the world leader in medical advancements.

Equally important to ensuring strong support for NIH in FY 2026, the AAMC urges Congress to ensure timely allocation of FY 2025 congressionally approved funds. The AAMC and its member institutions are grateful for Congressional support for NIH in FY 2025 but we remain deeply concerned about delays in obligating that funding. Congress did its part, and it is vital that legally appropriated funding is distributed as intended.

**Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.** Complementing the medical research supported by NIH, AHRQ sponsors health services research designed to improve the quality of health care, decrease health care costs, and provide access to essential health care services by translating research into measurable improvements in the health care system. The AAMC joins the [Friends of AHRQ](#) in recommending at least \$500 million in funding for AHRQ in FY 2026.

**Health Professions Funding.** The HRSA Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs each play a unique role in educating current and future providers to serve the nation's ever-growing needs, while preparing for the health care demands of tomorrow. For decades, these programs have proven successful in recruiting, training, and supporting nurses, physician assistants, mental health providers, and other health professionals critical to addressing a country's evolving health care needs.

The HRSA health career pipeline programs have proven successful in bolstering recruitment, training, and retention of underrepresented students, including from rural and economically or educationally disadvantaged areas. These programs include the Centers of Excellence (COE), Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP), and Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) programs, which offer innovative and varied education and training experiences for high school, undergraduate, and graduate-level students seeking to pursue health careers. Investments in pipeline programs — like those supporting mentorship and training offered through COEs, K-16 health outreach and education programs through HCOP, and scholarships to students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds through SDS — help connect rural and disadvantaged students to health careers while also exposing providers to perspectives other than their own. Similarly, the Faculty Loan Repayment program supports health professionals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are in faculty positions to serve as mentors to the next generation of providers. The Medical Student Education Program provides grants to public institutions of higher education in the top quintile of states with a projected primary care shortage, to support graduate education for medical students preparing to become physicians. The program was established in FY 2019 and is designed to prepare and encourage medical students who are training in the most underserved states to choose residencies and careers in primary care that serve tribal, rural, or medically underserved communities. In the academic year 2022-2023, the program trained 3,680 medical students, with a total of 806 medical student graduates. Of these, 44% matched to residencies where they trained in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

We appreciate that Congress has allocated modest increases for a handful of the HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs in recent years; however, funding for many programs has been stagnant. The AAMC joins the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) in recommending \$1.51 billion for Titles VII and VIII in FY 2026, which would double the funding for the programs and help grantees address workforce shortages, ensure a strong and robust health workforce, and increase patients' access to care. Recognizing federal budget constraints, the HPNEC recommendation for HRSA Title VII and Title VIII has not increased for five years. This proposed funding level is a first step toward addressing health workforce shortages in critical areas of need and shaping the future health workforce at all stages of the continuum. Additionally, in the face of shortages of health professionals nationwide, the AAMC urges the Subcommittee to reject the massive cuts to HRSA health workforce programs proposed in the President's FY 2026 budget request, which includes the proposed elimination of 15 health workforce programs. If enacted, these proposed changes would undermine HRSA's efforts towards recruiting and retaining a health workforce equipped to meet the health care demands of tomorrow and ensuring access to care across the nation.

AAMC also supports \$778 million in FY 2026 for the HRSA Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program, which provides federal graduate medical education support for children's hospitals to train the future primary care and specialty care pediatric workforce. Likewise, we encourage the Subcommittee to provide robust funding for HRSA's Rural Residency Programs to support the development of new rural residency and rural track programs and expand physician

training opportunities in rural areas. The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) is another important HRSA program that plays a significant role in recruiting primary care physicians to federally designated HPSAs through scholarships and loan repayment options. The AAMC supports continued growth for the NHSC in FY 2026 appropriations, and we urge Congress to provide a level of funding for the NHSC that would fulfill the needs of current HPSAs.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.** The AAMC joins the [CDC Coalition in a recommendation](#) of at least \$11.581 billion for the CDC in FY 2026. In addition to ensuring a strong public health infrastructure and protecting Americans from public health threats and emergencies, CDC programs are crucial to reducing health care costs and improving health. Within that total, the AAMC supports \$35 million for CDC-supported firearm safety research and provides \$25 million for firearm morbidity and mortality prevention research at the NIH in FY 2026.

**Additional Programs.** The AAMC also supports the Hospital Preparedness Program within the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), in addition to support to continue the regional preparedness programs created to address emerging and other special pathogens, including funding for regional treatment centers, frontline providers, and the National Emerging Pathogen Training and Education Center (NETEC). Additionally, AAMC supports uninterrupted funding to support the key functions of the Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid to improve and maintain loan servicing for medical student borrowers.

Once again, the AAMC appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony and looks forward to working with the Subcommittee as it prepares its FY 2026 spending bill.