



February 23, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Cochran and Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Members Leahy and Lowey:

The 55 undersigned members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) write to encourage you to support our original FY 2017 request of \$524 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs. As you complete negotiations on the FY 2017 Labor-HHS-Education spending bill, we urge you to provide, at a minimum, the FY 2016 funding levels for each program in Titles VII and VIII, including the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP).

HPNEC is an alliance of national organizations representing schools, programs, health professionals, and students dedicated to ensuring the health care workforce is trained to meet the needs of our diverse population. HRSA's Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs are the only federally-funded programs that seek to improve the supply, distribution, and diversity of the health professions workforce, with a focus on primary care and interdisciplinary training.

Your support for all Title VII and VIII programs is critical as budget cuts threaten to reverse progress made in mitigating the nation's health care workforce challenges. We recognize the difficult budget environment you face; however, the relatively modest investments in these programs produce a disproportionate positive return by strengthening our health care workforce. For example, continued funding for the Title VII HCOP diversity pipeline program would ensure that more than 12,000 trainees, including underrepresented minorities, veterans, and other individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, receive training to pursue a health professional career.<sup>1</sup> HCOP is the only federal pipeline program for minority and disadvantaged students who

---

<sup>1</sup> FY 2017 HRSA Congressional Budget Justification

want to become health professionals. At a time when the nation is growing and becoming increasingly diverse, it is crucial that we enhance the federal commitment to programs that prepare the next generation of health professionals for the health care challenges of a changing population.

The Title VII and Title VIII programs help shape the workforce in targeted ways, such as promoting interprofessional, team-based care; promoting service in underserved areas; and filling other gaps in the health care workforce. We appreciate that both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees proposed shifting the Behavioral Health Workforce and Education Training Program from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to HRSA. Shifting these funds, and not at the expense of other Title VII and Title VIII programs, to HRSA will better align the other mental and behavioral health programs that operate under Title VII authority.

As you work towards a final budget agreement, it is crucial that we enhance the federal commitment to the programs that equip the next generation of health professionals to keep up with the increasing health care challenges of a changing population.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of PAs  
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Dental Research  
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-Midwives  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Dental Association  
American Dental Education Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Medical Student Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Organization of Nurse Executives  
American Pediatric Society

American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science  
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
Association of Chiropractic Colleges  
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved  
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 (AMHPS)  
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Council on Social Work Education  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Health Professions Network  
HIV Medicine Association  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
National AHEC Organization (NAO)  
National Association for Geriatric Education  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions (NCDHP)  
National League for Nursing  
National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges (NN2)  
National Rural Health Association  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Physician Assistant Education Association  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine