



October 14, 2016

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

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
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 Rogers, and Ranking Members Mikulski 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.¹ HCOP is the only federal pipeline program for minority and disadvantaged students who

¹ 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