



April 21, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education  
Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education  
Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As you work to complete the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) respectfully requests:

- **\$244 million for the Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act).**
- **At least \$2 billion above the FY 2017 funding level for the National Institutes of Health, in addition to funds included in the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255). Included in this funding level, AACN requests \$160 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR).\***
- **\$380 million for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC, Title III of the Public Health Service Act).**

As the national voice for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, AACN represents over 800 schools of nursing that educate over 477,000 students. Collectively, these institutions graduate our nation's registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), nurse faculty, and nurse researchers. Our members are committed to preparing a highly-educated nursing workforce and strengthening the foundation of nursing science.

#### *Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs*

For over fifty years, the Nursing Workforce Development programs have helped build the supply and distribution of highly-educated nurses. Title VIII programs strengthen nursing education at all levels, from entry preparation through graduate study, as well as support nursing faculty who teach today's students to be tomorrow's nurses. These federal dollars yield short-term and long-term return on investments for students, practicing nurses, academic institutions, the healthcare system, and above all, America's patients. Through grants, scholarships, and loan repayments programs, Title VIII dollars directly impact the profession's ability to serve communities most in need, bolster diversity within the workforce, and increase the number of nurses trained to serve our aging population. In academic year 2015-2016, Title VIII programs supported over 61,000 students.<sup>1</sup>

#### *National Institute of Nursing Research*

As one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at NIH, NINR develops knowledge to build the scientific foundation for clinical practice to improve healthcare delivery across the entire lifespan. Nurse scientists—often working collaboratively with other health professions—are generating and translating new findings focused on cutting edge innovations such as big data and data science, precision health, and genomics. In addition, NINR allots a generous portion of its budget towards training new nursing scientists, thus helping to sustain the longevity and contributions of nursing research.

\* This request is based on the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research's FY 2018 request for the total funding level for NIH.

*National Health Service Corps*

According to HRSA, as of January 2017, there were over 65 million individuals living in primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), over 51 million living in dental HPSAs, and over 106 million living in mental health HPSAs. Participants of the NHSC Scholarship Program and Loan Repayment Program reach the millions living in underserved communities by providing financial support to graduate health professions students and clinicians (including APRNs) who are committed to practicing in these regions.

AACN recognizes the challenging fiscal climate and the difficult decisions that must be made by your subcommittee, and I thank you for considering our requests for FY 2018. If AACN can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact AACN's Director of Government Affairs, Lauren Inouye, at (202) 463-6930, ext. 271 or [linouye@aacn.nche.edu](mailto:linouye@aacn.nche.edu).

Sincerely,



Juliann G. Sebastian, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Board Chair

CC:

Senator Thad Cochran  
Senator Richard Shelby  
Senator Lamar Alexander  
Senator Lindsey Graham  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Senator Shelley Moore Capito  
Senator James Lankford  
Senator John Kennedy  
Senator Marco Rubio  
Senator Richard Durbin  
Senator Jack Reed  
Senator Jeanne Shaheen  
Senator Jeff Merkley  
Senator Brian Schatz  
Senator Tammy Baldwin  
Senator Chris Murphy  
Senator Joe Manchin

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<sup>i</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2016). Health Resources and Services Administration Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrsa.gov/about/budget/budgetjustification2017.pdf>.