



July 30, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Vice Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Collins and Vice Chair Murray:

On behalf of 63 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community Coalition (NCC), we appreciate your bipartisan work to advance a Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill and strongly urge your support of **at least \$530 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs** (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]), **at least \$210 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), as well as preserving NINR as an independent Institute within NIH in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.** As the Committee continues to consider policies to ensure that patients have access to high—quality healthcare, it is imperative that nursing workforce and research funding reflects the heightened needs of American communities. We appreciate Congress' commitment to nursing education, workforce, and research and urge you to retain and support this critical funding for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and NINR in FY 2026.

**Background: The Need to Support our Current and Future Nursing Workforce:**

The NCC is a cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the nursing profession. Together, the NCC represents Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs),<sup>1</sup> nurse leaders, boards of nursing, students, faculty, and researchers. As the largest segment of the health care profession,<sup>2</sup> nursing is involved at every point of care. We recognize that supporting health care in all communities, including in our rural and underserved areas, requires continued investments in nursing. This is especially true as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects the demand for RNs will increase 6% by 2033,<sup>3</sup> and the demand for most APRNs is expected to grow by 40%.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> APRNs include certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and nurse practitioners (NPs).

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Sean and Blank, Andrew. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (June 2023) Healthcare Occupations: Characteristics of the Employed. Slide Two: Employment in the 25 largest healthcare occupations, 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2023/healthcare-occupations-in-2022/>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024). Occupational Outlook Handbook- Registered Nurses. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024). Occupational Outlook Handbook- Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Midwives, and Nurse Practitioners. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/nurse-anesthetists-nurse-midwives-and-nurse-practitioners.htm>

Healthcare continues to be inundated by short staffing and high workloads that strain the nursing profession. In fact, the 2024 National Nursing Workforce Survey revealed 138,000 nurses have left the workforce since 2022 and more than 40% of respondents express an intent to leave or retire in the next 5 years.<sup>5</sup> Such numbers reinforce concerns about ongoing labor shortages and underscore the importance of maintaining robust recruitment and retention programs for nurses. With an aging population and an increased need for nurses throughout the country, bold investments in Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and NINR are critical, not only as we address the current needs of the profession, but as we prepare for the health care workforce of tomorrow.

### **Title VIII Nursing Workforce Programs: Essential to supporting America's Health**

As the largest dedicated federal funding for nurses, Title VIII programs bolster and sustain the nation's nursing pipeline by addressing all aspects of nursing workforce demand. From scholarship and loan repayments, to supporting APRNs and future faculty, Title VIII programs offer a strategic and cost-effective approach to supporting the nursing workforce and patients across the country. For instance, in Academic Year (AY) 2022-2023:

- Advanced Nursing Education (ANE) programs supported more than 8,000 students and provided for “over 2 million hours of patient care and nearly 900,000 patient encounters [that] occurred in medically underserved communities.”<sup>6</sup>
- Graduates of Title VIII not only advance their education, but also work or serve in medically underserved areas. In fact, more than three-quarters of Nurse Corps providers were employed in community-based settings and 20% were in rural communities.<sup>7</sup>
- 74% of Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) graduates from AY 2021-2022 were in faculty positions one year later, with the majority teaching at the bachelor's or higher level.<sup>8</sup>
- Programs like Nurse, Education, Practice, Quality and Retention (NEPQR), which supported over 10,300 nurses and nursing students, help with the development, distribution, and retention of a nursing workforce that can adapt to the population's changing health care needs and provide the highest quality of care for all.<sup>9</sup>

All of these examples illustrate the advantage these crucial programs have on rural and underserved communities. In fact, investments in these programs help retain nurses as providers and valued healthcare experts within the communities they serve. To support this work, it is imperative that funding for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs meet levels reflecting the nursing population it serves in order to achieve maximum efficiency. These programs directly connect patients with high-quality nursing care in community health centers, hospitals, long-term care facilities, local and state health departments, schools, workplaces, and

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<sup>5</sup> National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2024). Results of the 2024 National Nursing Workforce Study. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncsbn.org/workforce> (full journal article available at:

[https://www.journalofnursingregulation.com/article/S2155-8256\(25\)00047-X/fulltext](https://www.journalofnursingregulation.com/article/S2155-8256(25)00047-X/fulltext))

<sup>6</sup> Health Resources and Services Administration. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Justification. Pages 143-146. Retrieved from: <https://web.archive.org/web/20250308124649/https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/about/budget/budget-justification-fy2025.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, Pages 157-161.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, Pages 154-156.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, Pages 151-153.

patients' homes. With nearly five million nurses throughout the country,<sup>10</sup> and increased demand for more nurses to serve our communities, Title VIII programs are a strategic investment that need elevated support in FY 2026.

### **Advancing Health Innovation through Nursing Science and Research:**

We have also seen the importance of science in the discussion of cures, patient safety, and preparedness. As the only Institute or Center at NIH that directly supports research by nurse scientists, NINR promotes patient-centered care across the life continuum. Since nursing research was established as an independent entity within NIH, NINR has continued developing and testing community-based models, particularly in rural and underserved areas. It is through the substantial work of nurse researchers and scientists that we have seen:

- Prevention and care for low birthweight infants, which, “improved the infant’s environment, was safe and effective, and ‘saved approximately \$18,560 per infant in hospital and physician costs.’”<sup>11</sup>
- Symptom management for those with Alzheimer’s “—including a ‘remarkable series of genetic discoveries’—contributed to ‘major advances’ in understanding the disease.”<sup>12</sup>
- Reducing pressure sores through the development of the Braden Scale, a condition that impacts millions, and estimated at “\$9 billion in annual health care costs.”<sup>13</sup>
- Leading end-of-life (EOL) research that helped elders both to develop an advance directive and maintain a continuity of care, thereby ‘increasing the likelihood’ that their wishes would be followed.”<sup>14</sup>
- Research documenting that adequate nursing staffing models lead to a positive work environment, lower staff turnover and burnout, and increase patient safety and satisfaction.<sup>15</sup>

The innovative research by our nation’s nurses and scientists directly shapes nursing education, supports faculty and nursing schools, and is essential to developing new evidence-based practices to care for all patients. Through increased investments in NINR, and retaining NINR as an independent Institute, nurse researchers and scientists will be able to continue their invaluable work at the forefront of chronic disease prevention, patient care, and recovery.

An FY 2026 funding bill that reduces funding for the Title VIII Programs and NINR would have devastating impacts on patient care, which is why sustained investments in these programs are so vital. As we support America’s health, we urge you to **invest in our nation’s nurses by**

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<sup>10</sup> National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2024). Active RN Licenses: A profile of nursing licensure in the U.S. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncsbn.org/nursing-regulation/national-nursing-database/licensure-statistics/active-rn-licenses.page>

<sup>11</sup> Cantelon, Philip L. PhD. National Institute of Nursing Research, NINR, Bringing Science to Life. (September 2010). Page 87. Retrieved from: [https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR\\_History\\_Book\\_508.pdf](https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR_History_Book_508.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Cantelon, Philip L. PhD. National Institute of Nursing Research, NINR, Bringing Science to Life. (September 2010). Page 180-185. Retrieved from: [https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR\\_History\\_Book\\_508.pdf](https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR_History_Book_508.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> The National Institute of Nursing Research, Changing Practice, Changing Lives: 10 Landmark Nursing Research Studies. Page 5. Retrieved from: <https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/docs/10-landmark-nursing-research-studies.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Cantelon, Philip L. PhD. National Institute of Nursing Research, NINR, Bringing Science to Life. (September 2010). Page 194. Retrieved from: [https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR\\_History\\_Book\\_508.pdf](https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NINR_History_Book_508.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> The National Institute of Nursing Research, Changing Practice, Changing Lives: 10 Landmark Nursing Research Studies. Page 3-4. Retrieved from: <https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/docs/10-landmark-nursing-research-studies.pdf>

**providing at least \$530 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and at least \$210 million for NINR, as well as preserving NINR as an independent Institute within NIH in FY 2026.** We appreciate the Committee's bipartisan work to safeguard the public's well-being by putting forward strategic investments for these critical programs. If our organizations can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please contact the Nursing Community Coalition's Executive Director, Rachel Minahan at [rstevenson@thenursingcommunity.org](mailto:rstevenson@thenursingcommunity.org).

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses  
Academy of Neonatal Nursing  
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing  
American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses  
American Association of Heart Failure Nurses  
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses  
American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses  
American Association of Post-Acute Care Nursing  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American Nephrology Nurses Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Nursing Informatics Association  
American Organization for Nursing Leadership  
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc.  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section  
American Society for Pain Management Nursing  
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses  
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care  
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses  
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses  
Association of Public Health Nurses  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Dermatology Nurses' Association  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research  
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
Infusion Nurses Society

International Association of Forensic Nurses  
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of Hispanic Nurses  
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of Neonatal Nurses  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Black Nurses Association  
National Council of State Boards of Nursing  
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers  
National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence  
National League for Nursing  
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium  
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing  
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Society of Pediatric Nurses  
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates  
Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society

cc:

Senate Majority Leader John Thune  
Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer  
All Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations