

THE FUTURE ADVANCEMENT OF ACADEMIC NURSING (FAAN) ACT (H.R.6607/S.3435)

The FAAN Act was introduced in the House by Rep. Lauren Underwood (D-IL-14) and in the Senate by Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) on December 11, 2025. There are currently 14 cosponsors in the Senate.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is the national voice for academic nursing representing more than 890 member schools throughout the country.

AACN member schools educate more than 570,000 students and employ more than 58,000 faculty.

Request: Cosponsor and Pass the Future Advancement of Academic Nursing (FAAN) Act (H.R.6607/S.3435)

AACN recognizes the need for investment in nursing education pathways, including at the baccalaureate, graduate, and post-graduate levels, to support immediate infrastructure needs and to meet future workforce demands. The FAAN Act would invest \$1 billion into accredited schools of nursing with special consideration given to supporting schools located or preparing students to practice in medically underserved and rural areas, including health professional shortage areas and noncontiguous U.S. states or territories. Specifically, the FAAN Act would:

ENSURE A STRONG NURSING WORKFORCE

The demand for nurses is growing faster than average, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the need for Registered Nurses (RNs) to increase 5%,¹ and the need for most Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to increase 35%² by 2034. The FAAN Act would support the enrollment and retention of all qualified students to ensure the next generation of nurses are available to meet the nation's healthcare needs.

HIRE & RETAIN NURSE FACULTY

AACN's most recent annual survey data shows that enrollment in PhD nursing programs declined for the eleventh consecutive year, with a slight 0.5% decrease from 2023 to 2024.³ Additionally, our most recent faculty survey revealed 1,588 full-time faculty vacancies across our member schools.⁴ These faculty vacancies present tangible challenges for nursing schools' ability to meet our nation's growing demand for frontline healthcare providers. The FAAN Act would help accomplish this goal by supporting the hiring and retention of nursing faculty.

MODERNIZE NURSING EDUCATION AND SUPPORT CLINICAL PLACEMENT

A recent AACN survey found that insufficient clinical sites and clinical preceptors are the primary barriers preventing schools of nursing from accepting more students.³ The FAAN Act helps address the need for more clinical education sites and preceptors, and provides investments in nursing education infrastructure and resources, including audiovisual, simulation and augmented reality resources, telehealth technologies, and virtual and physical laboratories to support the learning environment.

SUPPORT FUTURE NURSE SCIENTISTS & RESEARCHERS

The FAAN Act provides resources to support schools of nursing as they help prepare future nurse scientists and researchers who are essential innovators. The FAAN Act also supports the establishment of nurse-led partnerships to build upon the framework for future innovation and discoveries.

1. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2025). Occupational Outlook Handbook-Registered Nurses. Retrieved from:

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm>

2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2025). 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>

3. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2025). Schools of Nursing Enrollment Increases Across Most Program Levels, Signaling Strong Interest in Nursing Careers Retrieved from: <https://www.aacnnursing.org/news-data/all-news/article/schools-of-nursing-enrollment-increases-across-most-program-levels-signaling-strong-interest-in-nursing-careers>

4. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2025). Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions for Academic Year 2025-2026. Retrieved from: <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Reports/Faculty-Vacancy-Report-2025.pdf>

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