



September 22, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-204, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

As Congress continues working to address and combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) seeks inclusion of the Future Advancement of Academic Nursing (FAAN) Act (S. 4396/H.R.7945) in the next legislative relief package. The FAAN Act, introduced by Senate Nursing Caucus Co-Chair, Jeff Merkley (D-OR), along with Representatives and Registered Nurses, Lauren Underwood (D-IL-14) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30), ensures nursing education pathways remain strong during current and future public health challenges.

As the national voice of academic nursing, AACN represents more than 840 schools of nursing across the country. Our member schools educate more than 560,000 students and employ more than 50,000 faculty. The strain this pandemic has put on our healthcare system illustrates the vital need for increased investment in nursing education. While AACN members continue to combat the coronavirus and educate our future nursing workforce, we stress that more must be done to ensure the health and wellbeing of all communities throughout the nation. The FAAN Act reflects those needs by providing additional investments into nursing education by addressing immediate infrastructure support and long-term emergency preparedness strategies.

Specifically, the FAAN Act would support schools of nursing, with priority for those in underserved and rural areas, by providing resources to:

- **Enroll and retain nursing students to ensure the next generation of nursing leaders are available to meet the nation's healthcare demands.** Even prior to COVID-19, demand for additional nurses was expected to increase, with the Bureau of Labor Statistics projecting the need for registered nurses to increase 12% by 2028, representing a call for an additional 371,500 registered nurses.<sup>1</sup> The need for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) was even greater, expected to grow by 26%.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). Occupational Outlook Handbook- Registered Nurses. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). Occupational Outlook Handbook- Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Midwives, and Nurse Practitioners. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/nurse-anesthetists-nurse-midwivesand-nurse-practitioners.htm>

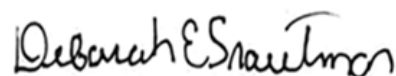
- **Hire and retain a diverse faculty to educate the future nursing workforce.** As the nation works to eliminate inequities in our healthcare system, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds including racial and ethnic minorities, the need to increase the diversity and cultural competence of our healthcare workforce is a critical component of achieving this goal.
- **Support schools of nursing, in partnership with facilities that provide health care, to establish or expand clinical education.** Additionally, the FAAN Act would support schools of nursing in partnering with community health centers, nurse-managed clinics, and other healthcare facilities to expand much needed clinical education opportunities.
- **Provide infrastructure support for nursing education.** As schools of nursing transition to remote/distant learning, many programs have been forced to significantly expand their remote capabilities. This transition is especially challenging as our schools provide clinical experiences specific to nursing education and to a variety of individuals with remote technological and equipment needs. These unplanned additional investments, which include training for faculty to teach in these new environments, ensuring broadband capability and accessibility, supporting simulation and telehealth resources, providing personal protective equipment (PPE) for students and faculty alike, and upgrading and purchasing new equipment, are essential to ensuring that nursing students continue their educational coursework.
- **Bolster programs that prepare nurse scientists and establish nurse-led partnerships to build upon the framework for future innovation and discoveries.**

During these unprecedented times, the nursing workforce, schools of nursing, faculty, and students are answering the call. As Congress considers providing additional stimulus relief to address the pandemic and plan for future public health challenges, we strongly urge inclusion of the FAAN Act (S. 4396/H.R.7945) in the next COVID-19 legislative relief package. We thank you for your efforts to address our nation's healthcare needs and look forward to our continued collaboration during this critical time. Should you have any questions, please contact Rachel Stevenson, AACN's Director of Government Affairs, at [rstevenson@aacnnursing.org](mailto:rstevenson@aacnnursing.org), or 202-463-6930 ext. 271.

Sincerely,



Susan Bakewell-Sachs, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Board Chair



Deborah Trautman, PhD, RN, FAAN  
President and CEO

CC:

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer  
House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn  
House Minority Whip Steve Scalise  
Senate Majority Whip John Thune  
Senate Minority Whip Richard Durbin

Chairman Charles Grassley, Senate Finance Committee  
Ranking Member, Ron Wyden, Senate Finance Committee  
Chairman Lamar Alexander, Senate HELP Committee  
Ranking Member, Patty Murray, Senate HELP Committee  
Chairman Frank Pallone, House Energy & Commerce Committee  
Ranking Member, Greg Walden, House Energy & Commerce Committee