

January 22, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
House Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Thune, Leader Jeffries, and Leader Schumer,

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) appreciates the work of Congress and the House and Senate Appropriations Committees for putting forward a conference Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS-ED) bill that includes **\$305.472 million for the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]) and \$197.693 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)**. As the national voice for academic nursing, AACN represents more than 875 schools of nursing at public and private universities, who educate more than 540,000 students and employ more than 53,500 faculty.<sup>1</sup> Collectively, these institutions graduate registered nurses (RNs), advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), educators, researchers, scientists, and frontline providers. In order for our schools to support our current and future nursing workforce, federal investment in nursing education is vital. **Therefore, we urge Congress to pass this minibus package before the January 30 deadline.**

To meet the heightened need for nurses, robust federal investments in nursing education and workforce development are paramount. Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs strengthen nursing education at all levels, from entry-level preparation through graduate study. Through grants, scholarships, and loan repayment opportunities, these vital federal investments positively impact the profession's ability to serve America's patients across the country. In fact, Title VIII Programs strengthen nursing education and practice, support pathways into the profession and career advancement for nurses, expand the nursing workforce, and serve rural and underserved communities.

AACN also recognizes that scientific research and discovery are the foundation on which nursing practice is built and is essential to advancing evidence-based interventions, informing policy and state-of-the-art education, and ultimately sustaining the health of the nation. As one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at NIH, NINR is integral to improving care and is on the cutting edge of new innovations that impact how nurses are educated and how they practice. Nurse scientists and

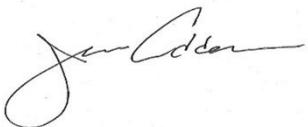
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<sup>1</sup> About the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Retrieved from: <https://www.aacnnursing.org/About-AACN>

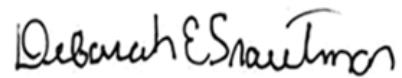
researchers at NINR and across NIH work collaboratively with others, breaking down silos, serving as faculty to future nurses, and informing best practices, all while contributing to a stronger healthcare system through patient-centered care across the lifespan.

AACN remains steadfast in its support of nursing education and research, especially as nursing schools, faculty, and students remain dedicated to meeting the health needs of our nation. As you consider ways to support our nation's current and future nursing workforce, **AACN strongly urges you to vote in favor of the FY 2026 minibus appropriations package that will provide \$305.472 million for the Title VIII Programs and \$197.693 million for NINR.** If AACN can be of any assistance, please contact AACN's Chief Government Affairs and Policy Officer, Rachel Minahan, at (202) 463-6930, ext. 271 or [rminahan@aacnnursing.org](mailto:rminahan@aacnnursing.org).

Sincerely,



Jean Giddens, PhD, RN, FAAN, ANEF  
Board Chair



Deborah E. Trautman, PhD, RN, FAAN  
President and Chief Executive Officer