



June 22, 2020

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As the nation continues to combat COVID-19 and prepares for future healthcare challenges, federal funding for nursing education and research remains essential. We appreciate your support of academic nursing as you advance the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS-ED) appropriations bill. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) would like to reiterate our FY 2021 funding requests of:

- **At least, \$278 million for the Nursing Workforce Development Programs** (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et. seq]); **and**
- **\$44.7 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), including at least \$182 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), from within the overall NIH funding level.**

In addition to our standard FY 2021 appropriations requests, AACN strongly urges the Committee to include additional supplemental funds for these crucial programs to meet the demands of the current public health challenge.

AACN represents more than 840 schools of nursing that educate more than 543,000 students and employ more than 45,000 faculty. Collectively, these institutions graduate our nation's registered nurses (RN), advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), faculty, and researchers. Our members are committed to preparing a highly-educated nursing workforce and strengthening the foundation of nursing science.

As we have seen, nurse educators, nursing students, and nurses are on the frontlines providing care to patients across the country, including those in rural and underserved areas. Now, more than ever, we must invest in nursing education, research, and the workforce to ensure the nursing pathway remains strong and ready to address current and future pandemics and healthcare emergencies.

The Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs have consistently and continually built the supply and distribution of highly-educated nurses by strengthening nursing education at all levels, from entry preparation through graduate study. Through grants, scholarships, and loan repayment programs, these vital federal investments positively impact the profession's ability to serve America's patients in all communities, especially those most in need, while also bolstering

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diversity within the workforce and increasing the number of nurses available during public health emergencies.

In addition, NINR, as one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at NIH, continues to develop knowledge to build the scientific foundation for clinical practice to improve healthcare delivery across the entire lifespan. In fact, 80% of research-focused educational training grants at schools of nursing are funded by NINR.<sup>1</sup> Through these grants and others, nurse scientists, often working collaboratively with other health professionals, are generating and translating new findings in areas such as big data and data science and precision health.<sup>2</sup>

Supporting the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and NINR is essential to sustaining a strong nursing workforce able to keep America healthy. AACN appreciates your consideration of our FY 2021 requests of **at least \$278 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs and \$182 million for NINR**, as well as the need for supplemental funds for these programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. If AACN can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact AACN's Director of Government Affairs, Rachel Stevenson, at (202) 463-6930, ext. 271 or [rstevenson@aacnnursing.org](mailto:rstevenson@aacnnursing.org).

Sincerely,



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



Deborah Trautman, PhD, RN, FAAN  
President and CEO

CC:

Senator Richard Shelby  
Senator Lamar Alexander  
Senator Lindsey Graham  
Senator Jerry Moran  
Senator Shelley Moore Capito  
Senator John Kennedy  
Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith  
Senator Marco Rubio  
Senator James Lankford  
Senator Patrick Leahy  
Senator Richard Durbin  
Senator Jack Reed  
Senator Jeanne Shaheen  
Senator Jeff Merkley  
Senator Brian Schatz

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<sup>1</sup> Journal of Professional Nursing (2019) National Institute of Health (NIH) funding patterns in Schools of Nursing: Who is funding nursing science research and who is conducting research at Schools of Nursing?

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755722319301164?via=ihub#!>

<sup>2</sup> National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Nursing Research. *The NINR Strategic Plan: Advancing Science, Improving Lives*. Retrieved from [https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/www.ninr.nih.gov/files/NINR\\_StratPlan2016\\_reduced.pdf](https://www.ninr.nih.gov/sites/www.ninr.nih.gov/files/NINR_StratPlan2016_reduced.pdf).

Senator Tammy Baldwin  
Senator Chris Murphy  
Senator Joe Manchin