House Appropriations Full Committee Marks Up LHHS-ED FY 2018 Appropriations Bill, Consolidates Title VIII Programs

Today, the House Appropriations Committee is holding a full Committee markup of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 appropriations bill among others. The bill details the funding levels for AACN’s programs of interest, specifically referencing nursing workforce diversity and nurse practitioner training (pg. 23). Overall, the language proposes that Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs receive $211.2 million, a cut of $18.3 million (or 8%) from FY 2017 funding levels (pg. 21).

Consolidating Title VIII: In this Committee Report, Title VIII has been consolidated under the title, “Nursing Workforce Development.” Funding for Advanced Nursing Education, Nursing Workforce Diversity, Nurse Faculty Loan Program, and Comprehensive Geriatric programs do not receive separate allocations or line items. The Committee only details two programs: $83.1 million for NURSE Corps and $128.1 million for Nursing Workforce Development.

Nursing Research and Higher Education: The National Institutes of Health (NIH) would receive $35.2 billion in FY 2018 (an increase of 3.3%), and within this, the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) would receive $152.6 million (an increase of 1.5%). The FY 2018 bill calls for a $3.3 billion cut from the Pell Grant surplus.

Highlights from today’s full Committee markup of the LHHS-ED FY 2018 Appropriations Bill:

Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) offered an amendment to restore funding for Title VIII and Title VII health workforce programs. The Congresswoman discussed the need for a diverse nursing workforce in the midst of an increasing demand for culturally-competent care at all levels of practice. The amendment was voted down along party lines (30-22), however Chairman of the LHHS-ED Subcommittee Tom Cole (R-OK) voiced his general support for these programs should “additional resources” become available.

In advance of the markup, AACN and the Nursing Community sent letters to the House Appropriations Committee requesting them to preserve funding for the Nursing Workforce Development Programs, not consolidate, funding for Nursing Workforce Development Programs. Additionally, AACN sent an action alert to its stakeholders who have a representative sitting on the Committee, and swift action was taken in 24 hours. AACN will keep its members apprised of the Committee’s action today and turn its attention to the Senate appropriations process, continuing to call on member advocacy. View the Title VIII: Community Impact Across the Nation Story Map. Catch up on AACN’s Appropriations Advocacy.

NIH Leaders Explain How Single IRB Policy Complements Common Rule

NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins and Associate Director for Science Policy Dr. Carrie Wolinetz published a commentary, “Single-Minded Research Review: The Common Rule and Single IRB Policy,” in The American Journal of Bioethics. The article explains how the inefficient involvement of multiple institutional review boards (IRBs) often presents major problems to investigators. Drs. Collins and Wolinetz address how NIH’s single IRB policy is complementary to the final Common Rule, which requires United States-based institutions that receive federal funding to use a single IRB for cooperative research. NIH will continue to work on implementation of the Common Rule. Read the full commentary here.