

AACN's WASHINGTON WEEKLY

Your Inside Track to Federal Policy



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AACN Testifies Before Energy and Commerce on Title VIII Reauthorization

On September 14, AACN Board Chair Juliann Sebastian, PhD, RN, FAAN, testified before the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Health on the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2017 (**H.R. 959**). Dr. Sebastian was one of four panel witnesses who participated in a hearing titled, **Supporting Tomorrow's Health Providers: Examining Workforce Programs Under the Public Health Service Act**, which examined four federal programs aimed at bolstering the healthcare workforce and ensuring access to care for populations most in need.

In her **testimony**, Dr. Sebastian provided on the ground evidence of how Title VIII funding has helped to expand the number of family and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners able to deliver care in rural and underserved areas surrounding the University of Nebraska Medical Center, where she serves as Dean and Professor of the College of Nursing. She also pointed to the fact that H.R. 959 would ensure future sustainability of Title VIII programs through Fiscal Year 2022, and proposes technical changes to the programs that align them with current trends in the profession, which are supported by organizations comprising the **Nursing Community Coalition**. Both Chairman Michael Burgess (R-TX) and Ranking Member Gene Green (D-TX) echoed support for Title VIII programs as did several Subcommittee members. To view a recording of the hearing as well as access additional documents, visit the Energy and Commerce **website**. View AACN's **legislative brief** to learn more about H.R. 959.



Health Reform Efforts Revitalized in the Senate

As readers may recall, the Senate had deliberated, but were ultimately unsuccessful, in passing a measure to repeal and/or replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA) before the August Congressional Recess. This past week, two new healthcare proposals were introduced in the Senate.

"Graham-Cassidy" Bill

Senators Lindsay Graham (R-SC), Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Dean Heller (R-NV), and Ron Johnson (R-WI) introduced a **bill** that would, in short, repeal the individual and employer mandates; move to provide states with block grants in lieu of federal subsidies; and repeal Medicaid expansion. The Senate would have until September 30 to vote and pass this package. The Senate Finance Committee is hosting a **hearing** for the proposal on September 25. For more information, view Senator Graham's **press release**.

"Medicare for All" Bill

Meanwhile, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) has unveiled his own healthcare plan, a single-payer "Medicare-for-all" **bill** that he promoted during his 2016 presidential campaign. As its title denotes, the legislation opts for a single-payer system in which private insurance would be eliminated and replaced with a comprehensive government insurance program.

AACN will continue to keep Grassroots Network members updated as legislative movement occurs. Through it all, AACN maintains that Congress "**Puts Patients First**" in health reform. Visit **Get Involved** to take action.