

AACN's

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Your Inside Track to Federal Policy



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Honoring Black History Month: Spotlight on Nurses in Policy

In honor of Black History Month, *Washington Weekly* will be featuring the accomplishments of African American nurses who have shaped health policy. Coinciding with this year's theme for Black History Month, *African Americans in Times of War*, AACN highlights Hazel Johnson-Brown, who was the first African American woman to become a Brigadier General in the United States Army. She enlisted in the Army at the age of 28, and played a key role in training nurses, most notably during the Vietnam War. She was appointed chief of the Army Nurse Corps and commanded over 7,000 nurses and served as director of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Nursing throughout the 1970s.

During her impressive career and commitment to life-long learning, she attained a bachelor's degree from Villanova University, a master's degree from Columbia University and a doctoral degree from Catholic University. After retirement, General Johnson-Brown's commitment to nursing's voice in health policy was demonstrated most prominently as she was instrumental in establishing George Mason University's Center for Health Policy, Research and Ethics. This Center has created a legacy where notable nurse leaders have contributed to advancing sound health policy, such as Dr. Mary Wakefield, former Acting

Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. General Johnson-Brown passed away in 2011, but her leadership has created a lasting impact on the lives and work of nurses in the military, higher education, and policy.

Congress Continues to Address FY 2018 While President's FY 2019 Budget is Expected Monday

On February 6, the House [voted 245-182](#) to pass a fifth continuing resolution (CR) that would keep the federal government open through March 23. Current federal funding expires at midnight on Thursday, February 8. In addition to defense funding, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 bill includes a two-year extender for expired health programs, such as Community Health Centers and the National Health Service Corps. The Prevention and Public Health Fund is used as a "pay for" for some of these extensions, and would be cut by \$2.85 billion over 10 years. The Senate will take up the House-passed CR, and is expected to make changes before sending it back to the House for additional negotiations.

Looking ahead, the President is expected to release his FY 2019 budget proposal on February 12. Last year, AACN [strongly opposed](#) the President's FY 2018 budget's proposed cuts to workforce and research programs, which would have a severe impact on the nursing pipeline and America's patients.

HHS Reports 2017 Accomplishments under the Trump Administration

On January 26, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [released a report](#) marking its accomplishments during the first year of President Trump's Administration. The report highlights efforts across the Department's divisions, specifically its work in reducing federal regulatory burdens, implementing a strategy for combatting the opioid crisis, and responding to public health crises inflicted by three major hurricanes. AACN continues to work with the Administration on these critical priorities. [Read the report here.](#)