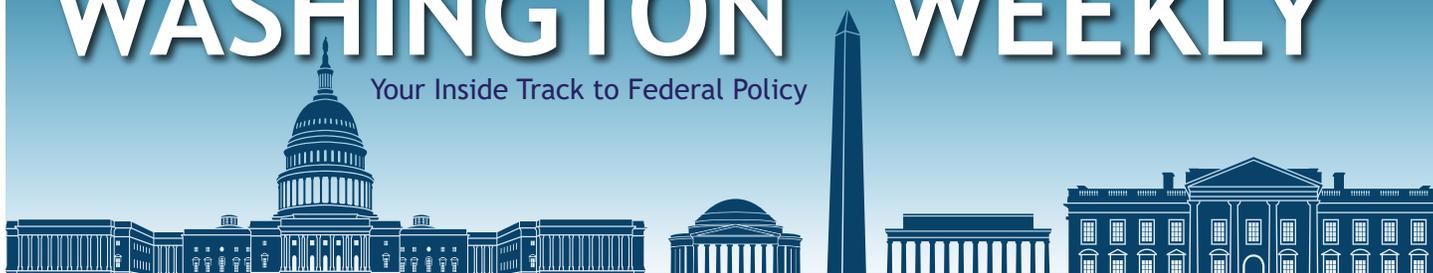


AACN's

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Your Inside Track to Federal Policy



May 23, 2018



Senate HELP Committee Hearing on Healthcare Workforce

Dr. Julie Sanford, Director and Professor at James Madison University (JMU) School of Nursing and a member of AACN's Government Affairs Committee, testified in front of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee during a hearing titled, "[The Healthcare Workforce: Addressing Shortages and Improving Care.](#)" During her testimony, she spoke on the impact and successes that the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs have had on improving access to care and supplying the pipeline of the future nursing workforce, especially in rural and underserved areas. Dr. Sanford deftly answered questions from the Committee including some that were related to nursing faculty shortage and diversity within the nursing workforce. In particular, Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) appreciated Dr. Sanford's explanation of the rigorous clinical training hours that family nurse practitioner students at JMU spend directly working with patients across the state of Virginia. You can watch a recording of the hearing [here](#).

Ask Your Legislator to Cosponsor the Addiction Treatment Access Improvement Act

On May 17, the House Energy and Commerce Committee [advanced more than 30 bills](#) focused on a public health response to the opioid epidemic. The legislative package followed the Committee's passage the prior week of 25 opioid-related bills. Included in the package was the Addiction Treatment Access Improvement Act of 2017 ([H.R. 3692](#)), introduced by Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), which would amend the Controlled Substances Act to permanently authorize APRNs to prescribe medication-assisted treatment (MAT), specifically buprenorphine, to patients struggling with opioid misuses and addiction. However, the Committee declined to consider this legislation due to concerns raised during the markup over the effectiveness of expanding the administration of MATs.

In an effort to have the Committee vote on H.R. 3692, Representative Tonko offered an amendment attaching H.R. 3692 to an unrelated bill, but that amendment was tabled due to concerns raised over relevance to the underlying bill. Although H.R. 3692 was not voted on by the Committee, the Chairman committed to work with the bill's proponents to resolve the issues around MAT prescribing authority. AACN and our APRN colleagues are continuing to work with our champions and Committee leadership to advance H.R. 3692 and its companion Senate bill, S. 2317.

We must build support for the Addiction Treatment Access Improvement Act. Ask your Representative and Senators to cosponsor H.R. 3692/S. 2317 to ensure it is included in comprehensive opioid legislation taken up by Congress. [Click here to send an action alert.](#)

