December 6, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Chair  
Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Vice Chair  
Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chair  
Appropriations Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Leahy, Chair DeLauro, Vice Chair Shelby, and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC), we urge Congress to **provide at least the higher of the two funding levels from the draft House and Senate Labor-HHS-Ed spending bill for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs for fiscal year (FY) 2023.** Providing the higher of the two levels is an essential first step in achieving HPNEC’s recommendation of providing $1.51 billion for the Titles VII and VIII programs.

HPNEC is an alliance of over 90 national organizations representing schools, programs, health professionals, and students dedicated to training our nation's health care workforce to meet the needs of our population. Together, the members of HPNEC advocate for continued support for the health professions and nursing workforce development programs authorized under Titles VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act and administered by HRSA.

HPNEC also urges members to finalize the FY 2023 spending packages as soon as possible and avoid additional continuing resolutions. We remain concerned that current funding levels for the chronically underfunded HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs will hinder our nation's ability to educate current and future providers to serve the needs of all patients.

The COVID-19 pandemic demanded a lot of our health workforce and learners, leaving many burned out and exhausted. We are grateful for the Committees’ proposed funding for the new Preventing Burnout in the Health Workforce program, authorized by the Lorna Breen Health
Care Provider Protection Act (P.L. 117-105). With a flu epidemic, RSV, and an impending winter COVID-19 surge, it is imperative to equip our health workforce with the support they need.

The HRSA Title VII and Title VIII programs have proven successful in recruiting, training, and supporting mental health providers, nurses, public health practitioners, geriatricians, and other front-line health care workers critical to addressing COVID-19. In addition, many of these programs target participants from diverse, economically disadvantaged, and rural backgrounds. Establishing a health workforce with providers from these backgrounds improves patients’ access to care and satisfaction and enhances health professions learning environments.

Additionally, we need to make sure that our health care system meets the ever-changing needs of patients across the country. Through developing new curriculum to address emerging public health crises, such as substance use disorders, or collaborating with community leaders in educating providers to deliver culturally competent care, to utilizing telehealth as a way to connect with patients, the Title VII and Title VIII programs help ensure our health workforce is at the forefront of new health care delivery systems and models of care.

Congress must increase investment in the Title VII and Title VIII programs to combat pervasive health inequities as seen in the COVID-19 pandemic and to prepare the health workforce for the health care demands of tomorrow. To that end, **HPNEC urges you to provide at least the higher of the two proposed funding amounts for Titles VII and VIII in FY 2023** to ensure our health workforce meets the needs of all patients.

If you have any questions, please contact do not hesitate to contact me or Katherine Cruz at kcruz@aamc.org.

Sincerely,
Matthew Shick
Executive Director

CC: Congressional Leadership
**Members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition**

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Student National Medical Association (SNMA)