



July 10, 2006

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Specter:

The undersigned organizations write to urge you to fund fully the health professions education programs by providing at least \$300 million for Title VII health professions programs and \$175 million for Title VIII nursing programs in the FY 2007 budget. These appropriations levels restore funding lost as a result of the devastating 51.5 percent cut (\$154.4 million) to Title VII in FY 2006, and provide vital support for the programs to fulfill their shared mission of improving the supply, distribution, and diversity of health professionals nationwide.

The Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill (H.R. 5647) passed by the House Appropriations Committee does not restore cuts enacted in FY 2006. While it reinstates funding to the geriatrics training programs, the bill maintains the substantial cuts to primary care and diversity programs, and the elimination of the rural training and workforce information and analysis programs. Further, the bill eliminates public health, preventive medicine, and dental public health programs, as well as the Health Careers Opportunity Program, a pipeline program that recruits minority and disadvantaged students into the health professions.

Title VII and VIII programs train providers with the skills to care for special needs populations and are the only federal programs designed to increase minority representation in the health care workforce. At a time when researchers predict imminent shortages across health professions disciplines, these programs are essential as they help increase the supply and distribution of primary care and other providers. As community health centers report significant provider recruitment difficulties, Title VII and VIII programs are needed to train health professionals who are more likely to serve in underserved communities and settings.

While we understand there are many competing priorities in the fiscal year 2007 bill, we fear that the enacted and proposed cuts to the health professions programs will exacerbate current and future health care challenges and will impact our nation's most vulnerable communities. We urge you to restore the devastating cuts from FY 2006, by fully funding the Title VII and VIII programs in the FY 2007 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to ensure the continuation of congressional support for these critical programs.

Sincerely,

2450 N Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20037 • 202-828-0525 • Fax 202-862-6218  
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Association of Chiropractic Colleges  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools  
Association of Professors of Medicine  
Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine  
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions  
Association of Specialty Professors  
Association of University Programs in Health Administration  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Clerkship Directors in Internal Medicine  
Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools  
HIV Medicine Association  
National Area Health Education Centers Organization  
National Association for Geriatric Education

National Association for Geriatric Education Centers  
National Association of Medical Minority Educators, Inc.  
National Association of Social Workers  
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