



November 4, 2011

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dennis Rehberg
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Harkin and Rehberg and Ranking Members Shelby and DeLauro:

The 46 undersigned members of the Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) write to urge full funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing programs in the final FY 2012 Labor-HHS-Education spending bill. HPNEC strongly recommends continuing appropriations for all Title VII and VIII programs at no less than their FY 2011 levels.

HPNEC is gravely concerned that proposed Title VII and VIII program eliminations and drastic reductions will severely undermine efforts to shape the health care workforce supply to meet the rising demand. Since 1963, the programs have demonstrated effectiveness in preparing the health care workforce to adapt and respond to the country's changing needs. As the only federal programs focused on filling the gaps in the supply of health professionals not met by traditional market forces, their elimination would aggravate challenges in boosting the supply of primary care practitioners, increasing diversity of the workforce, and improving the distribution of health professionals. Worse, loss of funding for the programs would reverse the progress to date in mitigating such challenges, particularly for special and underserved communities.

The population is growing, aging, and becoming increasingly diverse. Residents of underserved rural and urban areas alike already struggle to find health providers. We urge you to ensure the next generation of health professionals is equipped to address these health care complexities by prioritizing funding for the health professions programs as you finalize Labor-HHS-Education appropriations for FY 2012.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association (APA)
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physician Assistants
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Association for Respiratory Care-AARC
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Education Association
American Dental Hygienists' Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Osteopathic Association (AOA)
American Pediatric Society (APS)
American Psychological Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
American Society of Radiologic Technologists
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of Academic Health Centers
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Council on Social Work Education
Health Professions Network
Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools (HSHPS)
HIV Medicine Association
National AHEC Organization (NAO)
National Association for Geriatric Education
National Association of Geriatric Education Centers
National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions (NCDHP)
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Hispanic Health Foundation
National League for Nursing
North American Primary Care Research Group
Oncology Nursing Society
Physician Assistant Education Association
Society for Pediatric Research (SPR)
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine