

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 15, 2010

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education
Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education
Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Cochran:

We respectfully request that the Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act) receive \$267.3 million in appropriations for FY 2011, a 10% increase over last year's level.

Registered Nurses (RNs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) are key providers whose care is linked directly to the availability, cost, and quality of healthcare services. At a time when our nation moves toward a reformed system that will require more providers, significant strides must be taken to bolster the nursing workforce. Especially as the continuing shortage of nurses hinder the nation's healthcare reform goals of increased access, decreased cost, and improved quality. Fortunately, Title VIII is a pipeline program for the nursing workforce, but the programs cannot meet this need without additional funding.

Nurses and nursing students across the country benefited from the significant increase your Subcommittee provided these programs in FY 2010. However, the U.S. nursing shortage is projected to grow to 260,000 RNs by 2025. A shortage of this magnitude would be twice as large as any nursing shortage experienced in this country since the mid-1960s. Sustaining and increasing the investment in the Title VIII programs will help address the demand for professional nurses.

We hope that the Subcommittee will consider investing this increase in the Advanced Education Nursing, Nursing Workforce Diversity, Comprehensive Geriatric Education, and Nurse Education, Practice, and Retention programs, which complement the Loan Repayment and Scholarship Programs, and expand nursing school capacity as well as increase patient access to care. These specific Title VIII programs have not kept pace with inflation since FY 2005 and would benefit from the 10% increase awarded in proportion to their FY 2010 funding level.

Your support for \$267.3 million in FY 2011 funding for Nursing Workforce Development programs will make a real difference in the lives of healthcare consumers, nurses, and the dedicated faculty committed to educating the nursing workforce's next generation.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



Olympia J. Snowe
United States Senator

Jeanne Shaker

Jack Reed

Pat Fin

Herb Kohl

Chuck Sch

Iris Ankin

Eugene L. Dinger

Frank R. Lautenberg

Rebba Starnow

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Daniel K. Akaka

Jim Johnson

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Patrick Leahy

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Ron Wyden

John Barrasso

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