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Submitted for the Record to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies – Addressing the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

The National Association for Geriatric Education (NAGE) is pleased to submit this statement for the record recommending **\$41.997 million in Fiscal Year 2015 to support geriatrics programs** under the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Title VII, Section 753 of the Public Health Service Act. NAGE respectfully requests that the Subcommittee return to its approved level for FY 2010, which was also included that year in the Administration's request, but was not included in the final bill. Unfortunately, only \$34 million was funded in the final bill, and that has been cut to under \$34 million in subsequent years.

NAGE is a non-profit membership organization representing Geriatric Education Centers (GECs) and other programs that provide education and training to health professionals in the areas of geriatrics and gerontology. Our mission is to help America's health workforce be better prepared to render age-appropriate care to today's older Americans and those of tomorrow.

NAGE recognizes the Subcommittee faces difficult decisions in a constrained budget environment, a continued commitment to programs supporting the growing need for geriatric education programs that help the nation's health professions better serve the older and disabled population should remain a top priority. The nation faces a shortage of geriatric health professionals. Every day in America 10,000 more persons reach the age of 65 years. There simply are not enough geriatricians, gerontological nurse practitioners and the myriad other health professions needed to provide interprofessional care to this burgeoning older population.

Three geriatric health professions programs are financed under Title VII, Section 753 of the Public Health Service Act and are included in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Geriatric Education Centers (GECs) and their related programs, the Geriatric Academic Career Awards and the Geriatric Faculty Fellowships, provide much needed interdisciplinary geriatric and gerontology training to a broad range of health professionals who serve our rapidly growing aging population.

GECs train health care professional faculty, students, and practitioners in the interprofessional diagnosis, management and prevention of disease, disability, and other health problems of the elderly. This program also provides interprofessional continuing education for health care practitioners related to prominent issues in the field of geriatrics, such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and advances in palliative care, among others. The GEC program currently funds 45 GECs in 34 states, including statewide and multi-state programs. About half of GECs provide

education for areas that are more than 50% rural and one-fourth of GECs focuses on training in areas that are 25-49% rural. In the 2012-2013 Academic Year, GEC programs provided over 1,650 different continuing education courses to over 94,000 trainees. GEC grantees exceeded the program's performance goal by 58.5%.

Geriatrics Training for Physicians, Dentists, and Behavioral/Mental Health Professionals (GTPD) support faculty fellowships that help physicians, dentists, and behavioral and mental health professionals who plan to teach geriatrics in their selected fields. The aim of the program is increase the number of quality, culturally competent geriatric faculty and to retain mid-career faculty in geriatrics. GTPD provided funding for 64 fellows in the academia field of geriatric medicine, dentistry, and psychiatry. The GTPD fellows received clinical training in over 200 different health care locations across the nation. The majority were trained in Veteran's Affairs hospitals, private hospitals and academic centers with nearly half of the sites located in medically underserved communities. Notably, each fellow dedicated at least 25% of their time for teaching health students about geriatric-related topics. In Academic Year 2012-2013, it is estimated that over 275 courses, workshops and other activities were delivered by GTPD fellows.

Geriatrics Academic Career Awards (GACAs) provide a financial incentive for junior faculty to pursue an academic career in geriatrics. GACA currently supports 62 newly trained geriatric physicians. Award recipients delivered over 1,110 different health courses, workshops and other types of training activities to over 53,000 trainees across the health profession spectrum. The most common health professions include medical school students, residents in internal medicine and residents in geriatrics.

These successful programs improve the education, supply, distribution, diversity, and quality of health care professionals who care for our nation's growing older adult population, including the underserved and minorities. Thus, we need your continued support for geriatric programs to adequately prepare the next generation of health professionals for the rapidly changing and emerging needs of the growing and aging population.

On behalf of NAGE, thank you for this opportunity to share our requests for support for these important programs. We ask that you thoughtfully consider our request for funding in FY 2015.