

## May 25, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt Chair Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, DC 20510 The Honorable Patty Murray Ranking Member Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

We respectfully request that the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act, administered by HRSA) receive \$244 million in Fiscal Year 2018 through the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill. An investment in our nursing workforce today is a commitment to America's health care now and into the future.

More than ever, it is essential that communities across the nation have access to safe, high-quality nursing care. For over five decades, the Title VIII programs have been directly tied to this endeavor. The programs bolster nursing education at all levels, from entry-level preparation through graduate study, and also support academic institutions and the nurse faculty who prepare today's nursing students to be tomorrow's expert clinicians.

Title VIII programs strengthen the workforce and the care patients receive on multiple levels. For example, in Academic Year 2014-2015, the Title VIII Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship supported 3,008 students, of which 72% were trained in primary care. Additionally, 55% of Title VIII Loan Repayment Program participants working in an underserved area as a condition of loan repayment voluntarily extended their service contracts to continue providing care to these vulnerable populations. Collectively, the programs supported over 61,000 students in academic year 2015-2016 alone and assisted in bridging patients with nursing care across a variety of settings, including community health centers, hospitals, and schools of nursing, to name a few.

Title VIII programs also aim to promote a diverse nursing workforce to reflect an increasingly diverse patient population. In 2014-2015, the Nursing Workforce Diversity program supported 13,225 nursing students and aspiring students to promote the recruitment of individuals from racial and ethnic minorities underrepresented in registered nursing.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of our request and understand the difficult decisions your Subcommittee will face in this fiscal climate. However, support for Title VIII Nursing

Workforce Development Programs is a direct investment in the nursing workforce, our nation's well-being, and the sustainability of our health care system as a whole.

Jeffrey A. Merkley United States Senate

Sincerely,

Tammy Baldwin United States Senate

Richard Blumenthal United States Senate

United States Senate

Christopher A. Coons United States Senate

Kirsten Gillibrand United States Senate

Martin Heinrich United States Senate

Tim Kaine United States Senate Cory A. Booker United States Senate

Robert P. Casey Jr.

United States Senate

Al Franken United States Senate

Margaret Wood Hassan United States Senate

Heidi Heitkamp United States Senate

Amy Klobuchar United States Senate

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Gary C. Peters United States Senate	
Bernard Sanders United States Senate	
Jeanne Shaheen United States Senate	
Jon Tester United States Senate	
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Ron Wyden	

United States Senate



Sheldon Whitehouse United States Senate

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